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THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES

THE SECOND

TO

THE REVOLUTION

OF THE

AMERICAN

WARR

BY

WILLIAM

CHAPMAN



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THE
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND.

FROM THE
INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO
The REVOLUTION in 1688.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. IV.

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THE HISTORY OF

ENGLAND

FROM THE
INVASION OF HENRY II.

TO THE REFORMATION

OF THE LANCASHIRE

A NEW EDITION

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C O N T E N T S

O F T H E

F O U R T H V O L U M E.

C H A P. XVIII.

H E N R Y IV.

Title of the king — An insurrection — An insurrection in Wales — The earl of Northumberland rebels — Battle of Shrewsbury — State of Scotland — Parliamentary transactions — Death — and character of the king.

Page 1

C H A P. XIX.

H E N R Y V.

The king's former disorders — His reformation — The Lollards — Punishment of Lord Cobham — State of France — Invasion of that kingdom — Battle of Azincour — State of France — New invasion of France — Assassination of the duke of Burgundy — Treaty of Troye — Marriage of the king — His death — and character — Miscellaneous transactions during this reign.

32

C H A P. XX.

H E N R Y VI.

Government during the minority — State of France — Military operations — Battle of Verneuil — Siege of Orleans — The maid of Orleans — The siege of

CONTENTS.

Orleans raised — The king of France crowned at Rheims — Prudence of the duke of Bedford — Execution of the maid of Orleans — Defection of the duke of Burgundy — Death of the duke of Bedford — Decline of the English in France — Truce with France — Marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou — Murder of the duke of Gloucester — State of France — Renewal of the war with France — The English expelled France.

Page 81

C H A P. XXI.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown — The earl of Warwick — Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk — His banishment — and death — Popular insurrection — The parties of York and Lancaster — First armament of the duke of York — First battle of St. Albans — Battle of Blore-heath — of Northampton — A parliament — Battle of Wakefield — Death of the duke of York — Battle of Mortimer's Cross — Second Battle of St. Albans — Edward IV. assumes the crown — Miscellaneous transactions of this reign.

152

C H A P. XXII.

E D W A R D IV.

Battle of Tooton — Henry escapes into Scotland — A parliament — Battle of Hexham — Henry taken prisoner, and confined to the Tower — King's marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Gray — Warwick disgusted — Alliance with Burgundy — Insurrection in Yorkshire — Battle of Banbury — Warwick and

C O N T E N T S.

Clarence banished — Warwick and Clarence return — Edward IV. expelled — Henry VI. restored — Edward IV. returns — Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwick — Battle of Tewkesbury, and murder of prince Edward — Death of Henry VI. Invasion of France — Peace of Pecquigni — Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence — Death and character of Edward IV. Page 200

C H A P. XXIII.

EDWARD V. and RICHARD III.

Edward V. — State of the court — The earl of Rivers arrested — Duke of Gloucester protector — Execution of lord Hastings — The protector aims at the crown — Assumes the crown — Murder of Edward V. and of the duke of York — Richard III. — Duke of Buckingham discontented — The earl of Richmond — Buckingham executed — Invasion by the earl of Richmond — Battle of Bosworth — Death and character of Richard III. 265

C H A P. XXIV.

H E N R Y VII.

Accession of Henry VII.—His title to the crown—King's prejudice against the house of York—His joyful reception in London—His coronation—Sweating sickness—A parliament—Entail of the crown—King's marriage—An insurrection—Discontents of the people—Lambert Simnel—Revolt of Ireland—Intrigues of the dutchess of Burgundy—Lambert Simnel invades England—Battle of Stoke. 317

C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. XXV.

State of foreign affairs — State of Scotland — of Spain — of the Low Countries — of France — of Britanny — French invasion of Britanny — French embassy to England — Dissimulation of the French court — An insurrection in the North — suppressed — King sends forces into Britanny — Annexation of Britanny to France — A parliament — War with France — Invasion of France — Peace with France — Perkin Warbec — His imposture — He is avowed by the dutchess of Burgundy — and by many of the English nobility — Trial and execution of Stanley — A parliament. Page 349

C H A P. XXVI.

Perkin retires to Scotland — Insurrection in the west — Battle of Blackbeath — Truce with Scotland — Perkin taken prisoner — Perkin executed — The earl of Warwic executed — Marriage of prince Arthur with Catharine of Arragon — His death — Marriage of the princess Margaret with the king of Scotland — Oppressions of the people — A parliament — Arrival of the king of Castile — Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk — Sicknes of the king — His death — and character — His laws. 397

THE
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND.

CHAP. XVIII.

HENRY IV.

Title of the king — An insurrection — An insurrection in Wales — The earl of Northumberland rebels — Battle of Shrewsbury — State of Scotland — Parliamentary transactions — Death — and character of the king.

THE English had so long been familiarized to the hereditary succession of their monarchs, the instances of departure from it had always born such strong symptoms of injustice and violence, and so little of a national choice or election, and the returns to the true line had ever been deemed such fortunate incidents in their history; that Henry was afraid, lest, in resting his title on the consent of the people, he should build on a foundation, to which the people themselves were not

CHAP.
XVIII.

1399.

Title of the
king.

2 HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

C H A P. XVIII. 1399. accustomed, and whose solidity they would with difficulty be brought to recognize. The idea too of choice seemed always to imply that of conditions, and a right of recalling the consent upon any supposed violation of them; an idea which was not naturally agreeable to a sovereign, and might in England be dangerous to the subjects, who, lying so much under the influence of turbulent nobles, had ever paid but an imperfect obedience even to their hereditary princes. For these reasons Henry was determined never to have recourse to this claim; the only one, on which his authority could consistently stand: He rather chose to patch up his title in the best manner he could, from other pretensions: And in the end, he left himself, in the eyes of men of sense, no ground of right, but his present possession; a very precarious foundation, which, by its very nature, was liable to be overthrown by every faction of the great, or prejudice of the people. He had indeed a present advantage over his competitor: The heir of the house of Mortimer, who had been declared in parliament heir to the crown, was a boy of seven years of age¹: His friends consulted his safety by keeping silence with regard to his title: Henry detained him and his younger brother in an honorable custody at Windsor castle: But he had reason to dread, that, in proportion as that nobleman grew to man's estate, he would draw to him the attachment of the people, and

¹ Dugdale, vol. i. p. 151.

make them reflect on the fraud, violence, and injustice, by which he had been excluded from the throne. Many favorable topics would occur in his behalf: He was a native of England; possessed an extensive interest from the greatness and alliances of his family; however criminal the deposed monarch, this youth was entirely innocent; he was of the same religion, and educated in the same manners with the people, and could not be governed by any separate interest: These views would all concur to favor his claim; and though the abilities of the present prince might ward off any dangerous revolution, it was justly to be apprehended, that his authority could with difficulty be brought to equal that of his predecessors.

HENRY in his very first parliament had reason to see the danger attending that station, which he had assumed, and the obstacles which he would meet with in governing an unruly aristocracy, always divided by faction, and at present inflamed with the resentments, consequent on such recent convulsions. The peers, on their assembling, broke out into violent animosities against each other; forty gauntlets, the pledges of furious battle, were thrown on the floor of the house by noblemen who gave mutual challenges; and *liar* and *traitor* resounded from all quarters. The king had so much authority with these doughty champions, as to prevent all the combats, which they threatened; but he was not able to bring them to a proper composure, or to an amicable disposition towards each other.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1299.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1400.
An insur-
rection.

IT was not long before these passions broke into action. The earls of Rutland, Kent, and Huntingdon, and lord Spencer, who were now degraded from the respective titles of Albemarle, Surrey, Exeter, and Gloucester, conferred on them by Richard, entered into a conspiracy, together with the earl of Salisbury and lord Lumley, for raising an insurrection, and for seizing the king's person at Windsor²; but the treachery of Rutland gave him warning of the danger. He suddenly withdrew to London; and the conspirators, who came to Windsor with a body of 500 horse, found that they had missed this blow, on which all the success of their enterprise depended. Henry appeared, next day, at Kingston upon Thames, at the head of 20,000 men, mostly drawn from the city; and his enemies, unable to resist his power, dispersed themselves, with a view of raising their followers in the several counties, which were the seat of their interest. But the adherents of the king were hot in the pursuit, and every where opposed themselves to their progress. The earls of Kent and Salisbury were seized at Cirencester by the citizens; and were next day beheaded without farther ceremony, according to the custom of the times³. The citizens of Bristol treated Spencer and Lumley in the same manner. The earl of Huntingdon, Sir Thomas Blount, and Sir Benedict Sely, who were also taken pri-

² Walsingham, p. 362. Otterbourne, p. 224.

³ Walsingham, p. 363. Ypod. Neust. 556.

soners, suffered death, with many others of the conspirators, by orders from Henry. And when the quarters of these unhappy men were brought to London, no less than eighteen bishops and thirty-two mitred abbots, joined the populace, and met them with the most indecent marks of joy and exultation.

C H A P.
XVIII.

BUT the spectacle the most shocking to every one; who retained any sentiment either of honor or humanity, still remained. The earl of Rutland appeared, carrying on a pole the head of lord Spencer, his brother-in-law, which he presented in triumph to Henry, as a testimony of his loyalty. This infamous man, who was soon after duke of York by the death of his father, and first prince of the blood, had been instrumental in the murder of his uncle, the duke of Gloucester^{*}; had then deserted Richard, by whom he was trusted; had conspired against the life of Henry, to whom he had sworn allegiance; had betrayed his associates, whom he had seduced into this enterprize; and now displayed, in the face of the world, these badges of his multiplied dishonor.

HENRY was sensible, that, though the execution of these conspirators might seem to give security to his throne, the animosities, which remain after such bloody scenes, are always dangerous to royal authority; and he therefore determined not to increase, by any hazardous enterprize, those numerous enemies, with whom he

1407.

^{*} Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 171.

6 HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

C H A P. was every where environed. While a subject,
XVIII. he was believed to have strongly imbibed all the
1401. principles of his father, the duke of Lancaster, and to have adopted the prejudices which the Lollards inspired against the abuses of the established church: But finding himself possessed of the throne by so precarious a title, he thought superstition a necessary implement of public authority; and he resolved, by every expedient, to pay court to the clergy. There were hitherto no penal laws enacted against heresy; an indulgence which had proceeded, not from a spirit of toleration in the Romish church, but from the ignorance and simplicity of the people, which had rendered them unfit either for starting or receiving any new or curious doctrines, and which needed not to be restrained by rigorous penalties. But when the learning and genius of Wickliffe had once broken, in some measure, the fetters of prejudice, the ecclesiastics called aloud for the punishment of his disciples; and the king, who was very little scrupulous in his conduct, was easily induced to sacrifice his principles to his interest, and to acquire the favor of the church by that most effectual method, the gratifying of their vengeance against opponents. He engaged the parliament to pass a law for that purpose: It was enacted, that, when any heretic, who relapsed or refused to abjure his opinions, was delivered over to the secular arm by the bishop or his commissaries, he should be committed to the flames by the civil magistrate before the whole

people⁵. This weapon did not long remain unemployed in the hands of the clergy: William Sautre, rector of St. Osithes in London, had been condemned by the convocation of Canterbury; his sentence was ratified by the house of peers; the king issued his writ for the execution⁶; and the unhappy man atoned for his erroneous opinions by the penalty of fire. This is the first instance of that kind in England; and thus one horror more was added to those dismal scenes, which at that time were already but too familiar to the people.

BUT the utmost precaution and prudence of Henry could not shield him from those numerous inquietudes, which assailed him from every quarter. The connexions of Richard with the royal family of France made that court exert its activity to recover his authority, or revenge his death⁷; but though the confusions in England tempted the French to engage in some enterprize, by which they might distress their ancient enemy, the greater confusions, which they experienced at home, obliged them quickly to accommodate matters; and Charles, content with recovering his daughter from Henry's hands, laid aside his preparations, and renewed the truce between the kingdoms⁸. The attack of Guienne was also an inviting attempt, which the present factions, that

C H A P.
XVIII.
1401.

⁵ 2 Henry IV. chap. vii.

^x Ibid. vol. viii. p. 123.

152. 219.

⁶ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 178.

⁷ Ibid. vol. viii. p. 142.

C H A P. prevailed among the French, obliged them to
 XVIII. neglect. The Gascons, affectionate to the me-
 1401. mory of Richard, who was born among them,
 refused to swear allegiance to a prince that had
 dethroned and murdered him; and the appear-
 ance of a French army on their frontiers, would
 probably have tempted them to change masters.⁹
 But the earl of Worcester, arriving with some
 English troops, gave countenance to the partisans
 of Henry, and overawed their opponents. Reli-
 gion too was here found a cement to their union
 with England. The Gascons had been engaged
 by Richard's authority to acknowledge the pope
 of Rome; and they were sensible, that, if they
 submitted to France, it would be necessary for
 them to pay obedience to the pope of Avignon,
 whom they had been taught to detest as a schis-
 matic. Their principles on this head were too fast
 rooted to admit of any sudden or violent alteration.

Insurrection
 in Wales.

THE revolution in England proved likewise
 the occasion of an insurrection in Wales. Owen
 Glendour, or Glendourduy, descended from the
 ancient princes of that country, had become ob-
 noxious on account of his attachment to Richard;
 and Reginald, lord Gray of Ruthyn, who was
 closely connected with the new king, and who
 enjoyed a great fortune in the marches of Wales,
 thought the opportunity favorable for oppressing
 his neighbour, and taking possession of his estate¹⁰.

⁹ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 110. 111.
 p. 171, 172.

¹⁰ Vita Ric. fec.

Glendour, provoked at the injustice, and still more at the indignity, recovered possession by the sword¹¹: Henry sent assistance to Gray¹²; the Welsh took part with Glendour: A troublesome and tedious war was kindled, which Glendour long sustained by his valor and activity, aided by the natural strength of the country, and the untamed spirit of its inhabitants.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1401.

As Glendour committed devastations promiscuously on all the English, he invested the estate of the earl of Marche; and Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to that nobleman, led out the retainers of the family, and gave battle to the Welsh chieftain: His troops were routed, and he was taken prisoner¹³: At the same time, the earl himself, who had been allowed to retire to his castle of Wigmore, and who, though a mere boy, took the field with his followers, fell also into Glendour's hands, and was carried by him into Wales¹⁴. As Henry dreaded and hated all the family of Marche, he allowed the earl to remain in captivity, and though that young nobleman was nearly allied to the Piercies, to whose assistance he himself had owed his crown, he refused to the earl of Northumberland permission to treat of his ransom with Glendour.

THE uncertainty in which Henry's affairs stood during a long time with France, as well as the confusions incident to all great changes in govern-

¹¹ Walsingham, p. 364.

¹² Vita Ric. sec. p. 172, 173.

¹³ Dugdale, vol. i. p. 150.

¹⁴ Ibid. vol. i. p. 151.

CHAP. XVIII. ment, tempted the Scots to make incursions into England; and Henry, desirous of taking revenge upon them, but afraid of rendering his new government unpopular by requiring great supplies from his subjects, summoned at Westminster a council of the peers, without the commons, and laid before them the state of his affairs ¹⁵. The military part of the feudal constitution was now much decayed: There remained only so much of that fabric as affected the civil rights and properties of men: And the peers here undertook, but voluntarily, to attend the king in an expedition against Scotland, each of them at the head of a certain number of his retainers ¹⁶. Henry conducted this army to Edinburgh, of which he easily made himself master; and he there summoned Robert III. to do homage to him for his crown ¹⁷. But finding that the Scots would neither submit nor give him battle, he returned in three weeks, after making his useless bravado; and he disbanded his army.

1402.

IN the subsequent season, Archibald earl of Douglas, at the head of 12,000 men, and attended by many of the principal nobility of Scotland, made an irruption into England, and committed devastations on the northern counties. On his return home, he was overtaken by the Piercies, at Homeldon on the borders of England, and a fierce battle ensued, where the Scots were totally

¹⁵ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 125, 126.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 125.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 155, 156, &c.

routed. Douglas himself was taken prisoner; as was Mordac earl of Fife, son of the duke of Albany, and nephew of the Scottish king, with the earls of Angus, Murray, and Orkney, and many others of the gentry and nobility¹⁸. When Henry received intelligence of this victory, he sent the earl of Northumberland orders not to ransom his prisoners, which that nobleman regarded as his right, by the laws of war, received in that age. The king intended to detain them, that he might be able by their means to make an advantageous peace with Scotland; but by this policy he gave a fresh disgust to the family of Piercy.

THE obligations, which Henry had owed to Northumberland, were of a kind the most likely to produce ingratitude on the one side, and discontent on the other. The sovereign naturally became jealous of that power, which had advanced him to the throne; and the subject was not easily satisfied in the returns which he thought so great a favor had merited. Though Henry, on his accession, had bestowed the office of constable on Northumberland for life¹⁹, and conferred other gifts on that family, these favors were regarded as their due; the refusal of any other request was deemed an injury. The impatient spirit of Harry Piercy, and the factious disposition of the earl of Worcester, younger brother of Northumberland, inflamed the discontents of

C H A P.
XVIII.

1403.
The earl of
Northum-
berland re-
bels.

¹⁸ Walsingham, p. 336. Vita Ric. sec. p. 180. Chron. Otterbourne, p. 237.

¹⁹ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 82.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1403.

that nobleman; and the precarious title of Henry tempted him to seek revenge, by overturning that throne, which he had at first established. He entered into a correspondence with Glendour: He gave liberty to the earl of Douglas, and made an alliance with that martial chief: He roused up all his partisans to arms; and such unlimited authority at that time belonged to the great families, that the same men, whom, a few years before, he had conducted against Richard, now followed his standard in opposition to Henry. When war was ready to break out, Northumberland was seized with a sudden illness at Berwic; and young Percy, taking the command of the troops, marched towards Shrewsbury, in order to join his forces with those of Glendour. The king had happily a small army on foot, with which he had intended to act against the Scots; and knowing the importance of celerity in all civil wars, he instantly hurried down, that he might give battle to the rebels. He approached Percy near Shrewsbury, before that nobleman was joined by Glendour; and the policy of one leader, and impatience of the other, made them hasten to a general engagement.

THE evening before the battle, Percy sent a manifesto to Henry, in which he renounced his allegiance, set that prince at defiance, and in the name of his father and uncle, as well as his own, enumerated all the grievances, of which, he pretended, the nation had reason to complain. He upbraided him with the perjury, of which he had

been guilty, when, on landing at Ravenspur, he had sworn, upon the gospels, before the earl of Northumberland, that he had no other intention than to recover the dutchy of Lancaster, and that he would ever remain a faithful subject to king Richard. He aggravated his guilt in first dethroning, then murdering that prince, and in usurping on the title of the house of Mortimer, to whom, both by lineal succession, and by declarations of parliament, the throne, when vacant by Richard's demise, did of right belong. He complained of his cruel policy, in allowing the young earl of Marche, whom he ought to regard as his sovereign, to remain a captive in the hands of his enemies, and in even refusing to all his friends permission to treat of his ransom. He charged him again with perjury in loading the nation with heavy taxes, after having sworn, that, without the utmost necessity, he would never levy any impositions upon them. And he reproached him with the arts employed in procuring favorable elections into parliament; arts, which he himself had before imputed as a crime to Richard, and which he had made one chief reason of that prince's arraignment and deposition²⁰. This manifesto was well calculated to inflame the quarrel between the parties: The bravery of the two leaders promised an obstinate engagement: And the equality of the armies, being each about 12,000 men, a number which was not unmanageable by the

C H A P.

XVIII.

1403.

²⁰ Hall, fol. 21, 22, &c.

C H A P. commanders, gave reason to expect a great effu-
 XVIII. sion of blood on both sides, and a very doubtful
 1403. issue to the combat.

21st July,
 Battle of
 Shrewsbury.

WE shall scarcely find any battle in those ages, where the shock was more terrible and more constant. Henry exposed his person in the thickest of the fight: His gallant son, whose military achievements were afterwards so renowned, and who here performed his noviciate in arms, signalized himself on his father's footsteps, and even a wound, which he received in the face with an arrow, could not oblige him to quit the field²¹. Piercy supported that fame, which he had acquired in many a bloody combat. And Douglas, his ancient enemy and now his friend, still appeared his rival, amidst the horror and confusion of the day. This nobleman performed feats of valor, which are almost incredible: He seemed determined that the king of England should that day fall by his arm: He fought him all over the field of battle: And as Henry, either to elude the attacks of the enemy upon his person, or to encourage his own men by the belief of his presence every where, had accoutred several captains in the royal garb, the sword of Douglas rendered this honor fatal to many²². But while the armies were contending in this furious manner, the death of Piercy, by an unknown hand, decided the victory, and the royalists prevailed.

²¹ T. Livii. p. 3.
 Hall, fol. 22.

²² Walsingham, p. 366, 367.

There are said to have fallen that day on both sides near two thousand three hundred gentlemen; but the persons of greatest distinction were on the king's; the earl of Stafford, Sir Hugh Shirley, Sir Nicholas Gausel, Sir Hugh Mortimer, Sir John Massey, Sir John Calverly. About six thousand private men perished, of whom two thirds were of Piercy's army ²³. The earls of Worcester and Douglas were taken prisoners: The former was beheaded at Shrewsbury; the latter was treated with the courtesy due to his rank and merit.

THE earl of Northumberland, having recovered from his sickness, had levied a fresh army, and was on his march to join his son; but being opposed by the earl of Westmoreland, and hearing of the defeat at Shrewsbury, he dismissed his forces, and came with a small retinue to the king at York ²⁴. He pretended, that his sole intention in arming was to mediate between the parties: Henry thought proper to accept of the apology, and even granted him a pardon for his offence: All the other rebels were treated with equal lenity; and except the earl of Worcester and Sir Richard Vernon, who were regarded as the chief authors of the insurrection, no person, engaged in this dangerous enterprise, seems to have perished by the hands of the executioner ²⁵.

BUT Northumberland, though he had been pardoned, knew, that he never should be trusted,

1405,

²³ Chron. Otterbourne, p. 224. Ypod. Neust. p. 560.

²⁴ Chron. Otterbourne, p. 225. ²⁵ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 353.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1405.

and that he was too powerful to be cordially forgiven by a prince, whose situation gave him such reasonable grounds of jealousy. It was the effect either of Henry's vigilance or good fortune, or of the narrow genius of his enemies, that no proper concert was ever formed among them: They rose in rebellion one after another; and thereby afforded him an opportunity of suppressing singly those insurrections, which, had they been united, might have proved fatal to his authority. The earl of Nottingham, son of the duke of Norfolk, and the archbishop of York, brother to the earl of Wiltshire, whom Henry, then duke of Lancaster, had beheaded at Bristol, though they had remained quiet while Piercy was in the field, still harboured in their breast a violent hatred against the enemy of their families; and they determined, in conjunction with the earl of Northumberland, to seek revenge against him. They betook themselves to arms before that powerful nobleman was prepared to join them; and publishing a manifesto, in which they reproached Henry with his usurpation of the crown and the murder of the late king, they required, that the right line should be restored, and all public grievances be redressed. The earl of Westmoreland, whose power lay in the neighbourhood, approached them with an inferior force at Shipton near York; and being afraid to hazard an action, he attempted to subdue them by a stratagem, which nothing but the greatest folly and simplicity on their part could have rendered successful. He
desired

desired a conference with the archbishop and earl between the armies: He heard their grievances with great patience: He begged them to propose the remedies: He approved of every expedient which they suggested: He granted them all their demands: He also engaged that Henry should give them entire satisfaction: And when he saw them pleased with the facility of his concessions, he observed to them, that, since amity was now in effect restored between them, it were better on both sides to dismiss their forces, which otherwise would prove an unsupportable burthen to the country. The archbishop and the earl of Nottingham immediately gave directions to that purpose: Their troops disbanded upon the field: But Westmoreland, who had secretly issued contrary orders to *his* army, seized the two rebels without resistance, and carried them to the king, who was advancing with hasty marches to suppress the insurrection²⁶. The trial and punishment of an archbishop might have proved a troublesome and dangerous undertaking, had Henry proceeded regularly, and allowed time for an opposition to form itself against that unusual measure: The celerity of the execution alone could here render it safe and prudent. Finding that Sir William Gascoigne, the chief justice, made some scruple of acting on this occasion, he appointed Sir William Fulthorpe for judge; who, without any indictment, trial, or defence, pronounced sentence

²⁶ Walsingham, p. 373. Otterbourne, p. 255.

C H A P. of death upon the prelate, which was presently
XVIII. executed. This was the first instance in England of a capital punishment inflicted on a bishop; whence the clergy of that rank might learn, that their crimes, more than those of laics, were not to pass with impunity. The earl of Nottingham was condemned and executed in the same summary manner: But though many other persons of condition, such as lord Falconberg, Sir Ralph Hastings, Sir John Colville, were engaged in this rebellion, no others seem to have fallen victims to Henry's severity.

THE earl of Northumberland, on receiving this intelligence, fled into Scotland, together with lord Bardolf²⁷; and the king, without opposition, reduced all the castles and fortresses belonging to these noblemen. He thence turned his arms against Glendour, over whom his son, the prince of Wales, had obtained some advantages: But that enemy, more troublesome than dangerous, still found means of defending himself in his fastnesses, and of eluding, though not resisting, all the force of England. In a subsequent season, the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf, impatient of their exile, entered the North, in hopes of raising the people to arms; but found the country in such a posture as rendered all their attempts unsuccessful. Sir Thomas Rokesby, sheriff of Yorkshire, levied some forces, attacked the invaders at Bramham, and gained a victory, in which both

1407.

²⁷ Walsingham, p. 374.

Northumberland and Bardolf were slain²⁸. This prosperous event, joined to the death of Glendour, which happened soon after, freed Henry from all his domestic enemies; and this prince, who had mounted the throne by such unjustifiable means, and held it by such an exceptionable title, had yet, by his valor, prudence, and address, accustomed the people to the yoke, and had obtained a greater ascendant over his haughty barons, than the law alone, not supported by these active qualities, was ever able to confer.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1407.

ABOUT the same time, fortune gave Henry an advantage over that neighbour, who, by his situation, was most enabled to disturb his government. Robert III. king of Scots, was a prince, though of slender capacity, extremely innocent and inoffensive in his conduct: But Scotland, at that time, was still less fitted than England for cherishing, or even enduring, sovereigns of that character. The duke of Albany, Robert's brother, a prince of more abilities, at least of a more boisterous and violent disposition, had assumed the government of the state; and not satisfied with present authority, he entertained the criminal purpose of extirpating his brother's children, and of acquiring the crown to his own family. He threw in prison David, his eldest nephew; who there perished by hunger: James alone, the younger brother of David, stood between that tyrant and the throne; and king Robert, sensible of his son's

²⁸ Walsingham, p. 377. Chron. Otterb. p. 261.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1407.

danger, embarked him on board a ship, with a view of sending him to France, and intrusting him to the protection of that friendly power. Unfortunately, the vessel was taken by the English; prince James, a boy about nine years of age, was carried to London; and though there subsisted at that time a truce between the kingdoms, Henry refused to restore the young prince to his liberty. Robert, worn out with cares and infirmities, was unable to bear the shock of this last misfortune; and he soon after died, leaving the government in the hands of the duke of Albany²⁹. Henry was now more sensible than ever of the importance of the acquisition, which he had made: While he retained such a pledge, he was sure of keeping the duke of Albany in dependence; or if offended, he could easily, by restoring the true heir, take ample revenge upon the usurper. But though the king, by detaining James in the English court, had shown himself somewhat deficient in generosity, he made ample amends, by giving that prince an excellent education, which afterwards qualified him, when he mounted the throne, to reform, in some measure, the rude and barbarous manners of his native country.

THE hostile dispositions, which of late had prevailed between France and England, were restrained, during the greater part of this reign, from appearing in action. The jealousies and civil commotions, with which both nations were dis-

²⁹ Buchanan, lib. 10.

C H A P.
XVIII.

turbed, kept each of them from taking advantage of the unhappy situation of its neighbour. But as the abilities and good fortune of Henry had sooner been able to compose the English factions, this prince began, in the later part of his reign, to look abroad, and to foment the animosities between the families of Burgundy and Orleans, by which the government of France was, during that period, so much distracted. He knew, that one great source of the national discontent against his predecessor, was the inactivity of his reign; and he hoped, by giving a new direction to the restless and unquiet spirits of his people, to prevent their breaking out in domestic wars and disorders. That he might unite policy with force, he first entered into treaty with the duke of Burgundy, and sent that prince a small body of troops, which supported him against his enemies³⁰. Soon after, he hearkened to more advantageous proposals made him by the duke of Orleans, and dispatched a greater body to support that party³¹. But the leaders of the opposite factions having made a temporary accommodation, the interests of the English were sacrificed; and this effort of Henry proved, in the issue, entirely vain and fruitless. The declining state of his health and the shortness of his reign, prevented him from renewing the attempt, which his more fortunate

1411.

1412.

³⁰ Walsingham, p. 380.³¹ Rymer, vol. viii.

p. 715. 738.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1412.
Parliamentary transactions.

son carried to so great a length against the French monarchy.

SUCH were the military and foreign transactions of this reign: The civil and parliamentary are somewhat more memorable, and more worthy of our attention. During the two last reigns, the elections of the commons had appeared a circumstance of government not to be neglected; and Richard was even accused of using unwarrantable methods for procuring to his partisans a seat in that house. This practice formed one considerable article of charge against him in his deposition; yet Henry scrupled not to tread in his footsteps, and to encourage the same abuses in elections. Laws were enacted against such undue influence, and even a sheriff was punished for an iniquitous return, which he had made³²: But laws were commonly, at that time, very ill executed; and the liberties of the people, such as they were, stood on a surer basis than on laws and parliamentary elections. Though the house of commons was little able to withstand the violent currents, which perpetually ran between the monarchy and the aristocracy, and though that house might easily be brought, at a particular time, to make the most unwarrantable concessions to either; the general institutions of the state still remained invariable; the interests of the several members continued on the same footing; the sword was in the hands of the subject; and the

³² Cotton, p. 429.

government, though thrown into temporary disorder soon settled itself on its ancient foundations.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1412.

DURING the greater part of this reign, the king was obliged to court popularity; and the house of commons, sensible of their own importance, began to assume powers, which had not usually been exercised by their predecessors. In the first year of Henry, they procured a law, that no judge, in concurring with any iniquitous measure, should be excused by pleading the orders of the king, or even the danger of his own life from the menaces of the sovereign³³. In the second year, they insisted on maintaining the practice of not granting any supply before they received an answer to their petitions; which was a tacit manner of bargaining with the prince³⁴. In the fifth year, they desired the king to remove from his household four persons who had displeased them, among whom was his own confessor; and Henry, though he told them, that he knew of no offence which these men had committed, yet, in order to gratify them, complied with their request³⁵. In the sixth year, they voted the king supplies, but appointed treasurers of their own, to see the money disbursed for the purposes intended, and required them to deliver in their accounts to the house³⁶. In the eighth year, they proposed, for the regulation of the government and household, thirty important articles,

³³ Cotton p. 364.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 426.

³⁴ Ibid. p. 406.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 438.

C H A P. XVIII. 1412. which were all agreed to; and they even obliged all the members of council, all the judges, and all the officers of the household, to swear to the observance of them ³⁷. The abridger of the records remarks the unusual liberties taken by the speaker and the house during this period ³⁸. But the great authority of the commons was but a temporary advantage, arising from the present situation. In a subsequent parliament, when the speaker made his customary application to the throne for liberty of speech, the king, having now overcome all his domestic difficulties, plainly told him, that he would have no novelties introduced, and would enjoy his prerogatives. But on the whole, the limitations of the government seem to have been more sensibly felt, and more carefully maintained by Henry, than by any of his predecessors.

DURING this reign, when the house of commons were, at any time, brought to make unwary concessions to the crown, they also shewed their freedom by a speedy retraction of them. Henry, though he entertained a perpetual and well-grounded jealousy of the family of Mortimer, allowed not their name to be once mentioned in parliament; and as none of the rebels had ventured to declare the earl of Marche king, he never attempted to procure, what would not have been refused him, an express declaration against the claim of that nobleman; because he

³⁷ Cotton, p. 456, 457.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 462.

knew that such a declaration, in the present circumstances, would have no authority, and would only serve to revive the memory of Mortimer's title in the minds of the people. He proceeded in his purpose after a more artful and covert manner. He procured a settlement of the crown on himself and his heirs-male³⁹, thereby tacitly excluding the females, and transferring the Salic law into the English government. He thought, that, though the house of Plantagenet had at first derived their title from a female, this was a remote event, unknown to the generality of the people; and if he could once accustom them to the practice of excluding women, the title of the earl of Marche would gradually be forgotten and neglected by them. But he was very unfortunate in this attempt. During the long contests with France, the injustice of the Salic law had been so much exclaimed against by the nation, that a contrary principle had taken deep root in the minds of men; and it was now become impossible to eradicate it. The same house of commons, therefore, in a subsequent session, apprehensive that they had overturned the foundations of the English government, and that they had opened the door to more civil wars than might ensue even from the irregular elevation of the house of Lancaster, applied with such earnestness for a new settlement of the crown, that Henry yielded to their request, and agreed to the

C H A P.
XVIII.
1412.

³⁹ Cotton, p. 454.

C H A P. XVIII. 1412. succession of the princesses of his family ⁴⁰. A certain proof, that nobody was, in his heart, satisfied with the king's title to the crown, or knew on what principle to rest it.

BUT though the commons, during this reign, showed a laudable zeal for liberty in their transactions with the crown; their efforts against the church were still more extraordinary, and seemed to anticipate very much the spirit which became so general in little more than a century afterwards. I know, that the credit of these passages rests entirely on one ancient historian ⁴¹; but that historian was contemporary, was a clergyman, and it was contrary to the interests of his order to preserve the memory of such transactions, much more to forge precedents, which posterity might, some time, be tempted to imitate. This is a truth so evident, that the most likely way of accounting for the silence of the records on this head, is by supposing, that the authority of some churchmen was so great as to procure a rasure, with regard to these circumstances, which the indiscretion of one of that order has happily preserved to us.

IN the sixth of Henry, the commons, who had been required to grant supplies, proposed in plain terms to the king, that he should seize all the temporalities of the church, and employ them as a perpetual fund to serve the exigencies of the state. They insisted, that the clergy possessed a

⁴⁰ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 462.

⁴¹ Walsingham.

third of the lands of the kingdom; that they contributed nothing to the public burdens; and that their riches tended only to disqualify them from performing their ministerial functions with proper zeal and attention. When this address was presented, the archbishop of Canterbury, who then attended the king, objected, that the clergy, though they went not in person to the wars, sent their vassals and tenants in all cases of necessity; while at the same time they themselves, who staid at home, were employed, night and day, in offering up their prayers for the happiness and prosperity of the state. The speaker smiled, and answered without reserve, that he thought the prayers of the church but a very slender supply. The archbishop however prevailed in the dispute: The king discouraged the application of the commons: And the lords rejected the bill which the lower house had framed for stripping the church of her revenues⁴².

THE commons were not discouraged by this repulse: In the eleventh of the king they returned to the charge with more zeal than before: They made a calculation of all the ecclesiastical revenues, which, by their account, amounted to 485,000 marks a-year, and contained 18,400 ploughs of land. They proposed to divide this property among fifteen new earls, 1500 knights, 6000 esquires, and a hundred hospitals; besides 20,000 pounds a-year, which the king might take

⁴² Walsingham, p. 371. Ypod. Neust. p. 563.

C H A P. XVIII. 1413. for his own use: And they insisted, that the clerical functions would be better performed than at present, by 15,000 parish priests, paid at the rate of seven marks a-piece of yearly stipend⁴³. This application was accompanied with an address for mitigating the statutes enacted against the Lollards, which shows from what source the address came. The king gave the commons a severe reply; and farther to satisfy the church, and to prove that he was quite in earnest, he ordered a Lollard to be burned before the dissolution of the parliament⁴⁴.

20th March.
Death,

WE have now related almost all the memorable transactions of this reign, which was busy and active; but produced few events, that deserve to be transmitted to posterity. The king was so much employed in defending his crown, which he had obtained by unwarrantable means, and possessed by a bad title, that he had little leisure to look abroad, or perform any action, which might redound to the honor and advantage of the nation. His health declined some months before his death: He was subject to fits, which bereaved him, for the time, of his senses: And though he was yet in the flower of his age, his end was visibly approaching. He expired at Westminster in the forty-sixth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.

⁴³ Walsingham, p. 379. Tit. Livius.

⁴⁴ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 627. Otterbourne, p. 267.

THE great popularity, which Henry enjoyed before he attained the crown, and which had so much aided him in the acquisition of it, was entirely lost many years before the end of his reign; and he governed his people more by terror than by affection, more by his own policy than by their sense of duty or allegiance. When men came to reflect in cool blood on the crimes which had led him to the throne; the rebellion against his prince; the deposition of a lawful king, guilty sometimes perhaps of oppression, but more frequently of indiscretion; the exclusion of the true heir; the murder of his sovereign and near relation; these were such enormities as drew on him the hatred of his subjects, sanctified all the rebellions against him, and made the executions, though not remarkably severe, which he found necessary for the maintenance of his authority, appear cruel as well as iniquitous to the people. Yet without pretending to apologize for these crimes, which must ever be held in detestation, it may be remarked, that he was insensibly led into this blameable conduct by a train of incidents, which few men possess virtue enough to withstand. The injustice with which his predecessor had treated him, in first condemning him to banishment, then despoiling him of his patrimony, made him naturally think of revenge, and of recovering his lost rights; the headlong zeal of the people hurried him into the throne; the care of his own security, as well as his ambition, made him an usurper; and the steps have always

C H A P.

XVIII.

1413.

and character
of the king.

C H A P. been so few between the prisons of princes and
 XVIII. their graves, that we need not wonder, that
 1413. Richard's fate was no exception to the general
 rule. All these considerations make Henry's situa-
 tion, if he retained any sense of virtue, much to
 be lamented; and the inquietude, with which he
 possessed his envied greatness, and the remorse, by
 which, it is said, he was continually haunted, render
 him an object of our pity, even when seated upon the throne. But it must be owned, that
 his prudence and vigilance and foresight, in maintaining
 his power, were admirable: His command of temper
 remarkable: His courage, both military and political,
 without blemish: And he possessed many qualities,
 which fitted him for his high station, and which rendered
 his usurpation of it, though pernicious in after-times,
 rather salutary, during his own reign, to the English nation.

HENRY was twice married: By his first wife, Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heir of the earl of Hereford, he had four sons, Henry, his successor in the throne, Thomas duke of Clarence, John duke of Bedford, and Humphrey duke of Gloucester; and two daughters, Blanche and Philippa, the former married to the duke of Bavaria, the latter to the king of Denmark. His second wife, Jane, whom he married after he was king, and who was daughter of the king of Navarre, and widow of the duke of Brittany, brought him no issue.

By an act of the fifth of this reign, it is made felony to cut out any person's tongue or put out

his eyes; crimes, which, the act says, were very frequent. This savage spirit of revenge denotes a barbarous people; though perhaps it was increased by the prevailing factions and civil commotions.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1413.

COMMERCE was very little understood in this reign, as in all the preceding. In particular, a great jealousy prevailed against *merchant strangers*; and many restraints were by law imposed upon them; namely, that they should lay out in English manufactures or commodities all the money acquired by the sale of their goods; that they should not buy or sell with one another, and that all their goods should be disposed of three months after importation ⁴⁵. This last clause was found so inconvenient, that it was soon after repealed by parliament.

It appears that the expence of this king's household amounted to the yearly sum of 19,500 l. money of that age ⁴⁶.

GUICCIARDIN tells us, that the Flemings in this century learned from Italy all the refinements in arts, which they taught the rest of Europe. The progress, however, of the arts were still very slow and backward in England.

⁴⁵ 4 Hen. IV. cap. 15. and 5 Hen. IV. cap. 9.

⁴⁶ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 610.

C H A P. XIX.

H E N R Y V.

The king's former disorders — His reformation — The Lollards — punishment of lord Cobham — State of France — Invasion of that kingdom — Battle of Azincour — State of France — New invasion of France — Assassination of the duke of Burgundy — Treaty of Troye — Marriage of the king — His death — and character — Miscellaneous transactions during this reign.

C H A P.
XIX.

1419.
The king's
former dis-
orders.

THE many jealousies, to which Henry IV.'s situation naturally exposed him, had so infected his temper, that he had entertained unreasonable suspicions with regard to the fidelity of his eldest son; and during the latter years of his life, he had excluded that prince from all share in public business, and was even displeased to see him at the head of armies, where his martial talents, though useful to the support of government, acquired him a renown, which, he thought, might prove dangerous to his own authority. The active spirit of young Henry, restrained from its proper exercise, broke out in extravagancies of every kind; and the riot of pleasure, the frolic of debauchery, the outrage of wine, filled the
the

the vacancies of a mind, better adapted to the pursuits of ambition, and the cares of government. This course of life threw him among companions, whose disorders, if accompanied with spirit and humor, he indulged and seconded; and he was detected in many follies, which, to severer eyes, appeared totally unworthy of his rank and station. There even remains a tradition, that when heated with liquor and jollity, he scrupled not to accompany his riotous associates in attacking the passengers on the streets and highways, and despoiling them of their goods; and he found an amusement in the incidents, which the terror and regret of these defenceless people produced on such occasions. This extreme of dissoluteness proved equally disagreeable to his father, as that eager application to business, which had at first given him occasion of jealousy; and he saw in his son's behaviour the same neglect of decency, the same attachment to low company, which had degraded the personal character of Richard, and which, more than all his errors in government, had tended to overturn his throne. But the nation in general considered the young prince with more indulgence; and observed so many gleams of generosity, spirit and magnanimity, breaking continually through the cloud, which a wild conduct threw over his character, that they never ceased hoping for his amendment; and they ascribed all the weeds, which shot up in that rich soil, to the want of proper culture and attention in the king and his ministers. There

C. H. A. P.

XIX.

1413.

C H A P.
XIX.
1413.

happened an incident which encouraged these agreeable views, and gave much occasion for favorable reflections to all men of sense and candor. A riotous companion of the prince's had been indicted before Gascoigne, the chief justice, for some disorders; and Henry was not ashamed to appear at the bar with the criminal, in order to give him countenance and protection. Finding, that his presence had not over-awed the chief justice, he proceeded to insult that magistrate on his tribunal; but Gascoigne, mindful of the character which he then bore, and the majesty of the sovereign and of the laws, which he sustained, ordered the prince to be carried to prison for his rude behaviour¹. The spectators were agreeably disappointed, when they saw the heir of the crown submit peaceably to this sentence, make reparation for his error by acknowledging it, and check his impetuous nature in the midst of its extravagant career.

His reformation.

THE memory of this incident, and of many others of a like nature, rendered the prospect of the future reign nowise disagreeable to the nation, and encreased the joy, which the death of so unpopular a prince as the late king naturally occasioned. The first steps taken by the young prince confirmed all those prepossessions, entertained in his favor². He called together his former companions, acquainted them with his intended reformation, exhorted them to imitate

¹ Hall, fol. 33.

² Walsing. p. 382.

his example, but strictly inhibited them, till they had given proofs of their sincerity in this particular, from appearing any more in his presence; and he thus dismissed them with liberal presents³. The wise ministers of his father, who had checked his riots, found that they had unknowingly been paying the highest court to him; and were received with all the marks of favor and confidence. The chief justice himself, who trembled to approach the royal presence, met with praises instead of reproaches, for his past conduct, and was exhorted to persevere in the same rigorous and impartial execution of the laws. The surprise of those who expected an opposite behaviour, augmented their satisfaction; and the character of the young king appeared brighter than if it had never been shaded by any errors.

C H A P.

XIX.

1413.

BUT Henry was anxious not only to repair his own misconduct, but also to make amends for those iniquities, into which policy or the necessity of affairs had betrayed his father. He expressed the deepest sorrow for the fate of the unhappy Richard, did justice to the memory of that unfortunate prince, even performed his funeral obsequies with pomp and solemnity, and cherished all those who had distinguished themselves by their loyalty and attachment towards him⁴. Instead of continuing the restraints which the jealousy of

³ Hall, fol. 33. Holingshed, p. 543. Godwin's Life of Henry V. p. 1. ⁴ Hist. Croyland. contin. Hall, fol. 34. Holingshed, p. 544.

C H A P.
XIX.
1413.

his father had imposed on the earl of Marche, he received that young nobleman with singular courtesy and favor; and by this magnanimity so gained on the gentle and unambitious nature of his competitor, that he remained ever after sincerely attached to him, and gave him no disturbance in his future government. The family of Piercy was restored to its fortune and honors⁵. The king seemed ambitious to bury all party-distinctions in oblivion: The instruments of the preceding reign, who had been advanced from their blind zeal for the Lancastrian interests, more than from their merits, gave place every where to men of more honorable characters: Virtue seemed now to have an open career, in which it might exert itself: The exhortations, as well as example, of the prince gave it encouragement: All men were unanimous in their attachment to Henry; and the defects of his title were forgotten, amidst the personal regard, which was universally paid to him.

The Lollards.

THERE remained among the people only one party distinction, which was derived from religious differences, and which, as it is of a peculiar and commonly a very obstinate nature, the popularity of Henry was not able to overcome. The Lollards were every day increasing in the kingdom, and were become a formed party, which appeared extremely dangerous to the church, and even formidable to the civil authority⁶. The enthusiasm

⁵ Holingshed, p. 545.

⁶ Walsingham, p. 382.

by which these sectaries were generally actuated, the great alterations which they pretended to introduce, the hatred which they expressed against the established hierarchy, gave an alarm to Henry; who, either from a sincere attachment to the ancient religion, or from a dread of the unknown consequences, which attend all important changes, was determined to execute the laws against such bold innovators. The head of this sect was Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, a nobleman, who had distinguished himself by his valor and his military talents, and had, on many occasions, acquired the esteem both of the late and of the present king⁷. His high character and his zeal for the new sect pointed him out to Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, as the proper victim of ecclesiastical severity; whose punishment would strike a terror into the whole party, and teach them that they must expect no mercy under the present administration. He applied to Henry for a permission to indict lord Cobham⁸; but the generous nature of the prince was averse to such sanguinary methods of conversion. He represented to the primate, that reason and conviction were the best expedients for supporting truth; that all gentle means ought first to be tried, in order to reclaim men from error; and that he himself would endeavour, by a conversation with Cobham, to reconcile him to the

C H A P.
XIX.
1413.

⁷ Walsingham, p. 382.
ments, p. 513.

⁸ Fox's Acts and Monu-

C H A P.
XIX.

catholic faith. But he found that nobleman obstinate in his opinions, and determined not to sacrifice truths of such infinite moment to his complaisance for sovereigns⁹. Henry's principles of toleration, or rather his love of the practice, could carry him no farther; and he then gave full reins to ecclesiastical severity against the inflexible heresiarch. The primate indicted Cobham; and with the assistance of his three suffragans, the bishops of London, Winchester, and St. David's, condemned him to the flames for his erroneous opinions. Cobham, who was confined in the Tower, made his escape before the day appointed for his execution. The bold spirit of the man, provoked by persecution and stimulated by zeal, was urged to attempt the most criminal enterprises; and his unlimited authority over the new sect proved, that he well merited the attention of the civil magistrate. He formed in his retreat very violent designs against his enemies; and dispatching his emissaries to all quarters, appointed a general rendez-vous of the party, in order to seize the person of the king at Eltham, and put their persecutors to the sword¹⁰. Henry, apprized of their intention, removed to Westminster: Cobham was not discouraged by this disappointment; but changed the place of rendez-vous to the field near St. Giles's: The king, having shut the gates of the city, to prevent any

1474.
6th Jan.

⁹ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 61. Walsingham, p. 383.

¹⁰ Walsingham, p. 385.

re-inforcement to the Lollards from that quarter, came into the fields in the night-time, seized such of the conspirators as appeared, and afterwards laid hold of the several parties, who were hastening to the place appointed. It appeared, that a few only were in the secret of the conspiracy: The rest implicitly followed their leaders: But upon the trial of the prisoners, the treasonable designs of the sect were rendered certain, both from evidence and from the confession of the criminals themselves ¹¹. Some were executed; the greater number pardoned ¹². Cobham, himself, who made his escape by flight, was not brought to justice, till four years after; when he was hanged as a traitor; and his body was burnt on the gibbet, in execution of the sentence pronounced against him as a heretic ¹³. This criminal design, which was perhaps somewhat aggravated by the clergy, brought discredit upon the party, and checked the progress of that sect, which had embraced the speculative doctrines of Wickliffe, and at the same time aspired to a reformation of ecclesiastical abuses.

C H A P.
XIX.
1414.

Punishment
of lord Cob-
ham.

THESE two points were the great objects of the Lollards; but the bulk of the nation was not affected in the same degree by both of them. Common sense and obvious reflection had discovered to the people the advantages of a refor-

¹¹ Cotton, p. 554. Hall, fol. 35. Holingshed, p. 544.

¹² Rymer, vol. ix. p. 119. 129. 193. ¹³ Wal-

singham, p. 400. Otterbourne, p. 280, Holingshed, p. 561.

C H A P.

XIX.

1414.

mation in discipline; but the age was not yet so far advanced as to be seized with the spirit of controversy, or to enter into those abstruse doctrines, which the Lollards endeavoured to propagate throughout the kingdom. The very notion of heresy alarmed the generality of the people: Innovation in fundamental principles was suspicious: Curiosity was not, as yet, a sufficient counterpoize to authority: And even many, who were the greatest friends to the reformation of abuses, were anxious to express their detestation of the speculative tenets of the Wickliffites, which, they feared, threw disgrace on so good a cause. This turn of thought appears evidently in the proceedings of the parliament, which was summoned immediately after the detection of Cobham's conspiracy. That assembly passed severe laws against the new heretics: They enacted, that whoever was convicted of Lollardy before the Ordinary, besides suffering capital punishment according to the laws formerly established, should also forfeit his lands and goods to the king; and that the chancellor, treasurer, justices of the two benches, sheriffs, justices of the peace, and all the chief magistrates in every city and borough, should take an oath to use their utmost endeavours for the extirpation of heresy¹⁴. Yet this very parliament, when the king demanded supply, renewed the offer formerly pressed upon his father and entreated him to seize all the ecclesiastical

¹⁴ 2. Hen. V. chap. 7.

revenues, and convert them to the use of the crown¹⁵. The clergy were alarmed: They could offer the king no bribe which was equivalent: They only agreed to confer on him all the priories alien, which depended on capital abbies in Normandy, and had been bequeathed to these abbies, when that province remained united to England: And Chicheley, now archbishop of Canterbury, endeavoured to divert the blow, by giving occupation to the king, and by persuading him to undertake a war against France, in order to recover his lost rights to that kingdom¹⁶.

C_H A P.
XIX.

It was the dying injunction of the late king to his son, not to allow the English to remain long in peace, which was apt to breed intestine commotions; but to employ them in foreign expeditions, by which the prince might acquire honor; the nobility, in sharing his dangers, might attach themselves to his person; and all the restless spirits find occupation for their inquietude. The natural disposition of Henry sufficiently inclined him to follow this advice, and the civil disorders of France, which had been prolonged beyond those of England, opened a full career to his ambition.

THE death of Charles V. which followed soon after that of Edward III. and the youth of his son, Charles VI. put the two kingdoms for some time in a similar situation; and it was not to be

1415.
State of
France.

¹⁵ Hall, fol. 35.

¹⁶ Hall, fol. 35. 36.

C H A P.
XIX.
1415.

apprehended , that either of them , during a minority , would be able to make much advantage of the weakness of the other. The jealousies also between Charles's three uncles , the dukes of Anjou , Berri , and Burgundy , had distracted the affairs of France rather more than those between the dukes of Lancaster , York , and Gloucester , Richard's three uncles , disordered those of England ; and had carried off the attention of the French nation from any vigorous enterprise against foreign states. But in proportion as Charles advanced in years , the factions were composed ; his two uncles , the dukes of Anjou and Burgundy , died ; and the king himself , assuming the reins of government , discovered symptoms of genius and spirit , which revived the drooping hopes of his country. This promising state of affairs was not of long duration : The unhappy prince fell suddenly into a fit of frenzy , which rendered him incapable of exercising his authority ; and though he recovered from this disorder , he was so subject to relapses , that his judgment was gradually , but sensibly impaired , and no steady plan of government could be pursued by him. The administration of affairs was disputed between his brother , Lewis duke of Orleans , and his cousin-german , John duke of Burgundy : The propinquity to the crown pleaded in favor of the former : The latter , who , in right of his mother , had inherited the county of Flanders , which he annexed to his father's extensive dominions , derived a lustre from his superior power : The people were

divided between these contending princes: And the king, now refuming, now dropping his authority, kept the victory undecided, and prevented any regular settlement of the state, by the final prevalence of either party.

C H A P.

XIX.

1415.

At length, the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy seeming to be moved by the cries of the nation and by the interposition of common friends, agree to bury all past quarrels in oblivion, and to enter into strict amity: They swore before the altar the sincerity of their friendship; the priest administered the sacrament to both of them; they gave to each other every pledge, which could be deemed sacred among men: But all this solemn preparation was only a cover for the basest treachery, which was deliberately premeditated by the duke of Burgundy. He procured his rival to be assassinated in the streets of Paris: He endeavoured for some time to conceal the part which he took in the crime: But being detected, he embraced a resolution still more criminal and more dangerous to society, by openly avowing and justifying it¹⁷. The parliament itself of Paris, the tribunal of justice, heard the harangues of the duke's advocate in defence of assassination, which he termed tyrannicide; and that assembly, partly influenced by faction, partly overawed by power, pronounced no sentence of condemnation against this detestable doctrine¹⁸. The same question was

¹⁷ La Laboureur, liv. xxvii. chap. 23. 24.

¹⁸ Ibid. liv. 27. chap. 27. Monstrelet, chap. 39.

G H A P. afterwards agitated before the council of Constance;
 XIX. and it was with difficulty, that a feeble decision,
 1415. in favor of the contrary opinion, was procured
 from these fathers of the church, the ministers of
 peace and of religion. But the mischievous effects
 of that tenet, had they been before anywise
 doubtful, appeared sufficiently from the present
 incidents. The commission of this crime, which
 destroyed all trust and security, rendered the
 war implacable between the French parties, and
 cut off every means of peace and accommodation.
 The princes of the blood, combining with the
 young duke of Orleans and his brothers, made
 violent war on the duke of Burgundy; and the
 unhappy king, seized sometimes by one party,
 sometimes by the other, transferred alternately
 to each of them the appearance of legal authority.
 The provinces were laid waste by mutual depredations: Assassinations were every where committed from the animosity of the several leaders; or what was equally terrible, executions were ordered, without any legal or free trial, by pretended courts of judicature. The whole kingdom was distinguished into two parties, the Burgundians, and the Armagnacs; so the adherents of the young duke of Orleans were called, from the count of Armagnac, father-in-law to that prince. The city of Paris, distracted between them, but inclining more to the Burgundians, was a perpetual scene of blood and violence; the king and royal family were often detained captives in the hands of the populace; their faithful ministers

were butchered or imprisoned before their face; and it was dangerous for any man, amidst these enraged factions, to be distinguished by a strict adherence to the principles of probity and honor.

DURING this scene of general violence, there rose into some consideration a body of men, which usually makes no figure in public transactions even during the most peaceful times; and that was the university of Paris, whose opinion was sometimes demanded, and more frequently offered, in the multiplied disputes between the parties. The schism, by which the church was at that time divided, and which occasioned frequent controversies in the university, had raised the professors to an unusual degree of importance; and this connection between literature and superstition had bestowed on the former a weight, to which reason and knowledge are not, of themselves, any wise entitled among men. But there was another society whose sentiments were much more decisive at Paris, the fraternity of butchers, who, under the direction of their ringleaders, had declared for the duke of Burgundy, and committed the most violent outrages against the opposite party. To counterbalance their power, the Armagnacs made interest with the fraternity of carpenters; the populace ranged themselves on one side or the other; and the fate of the capital depended on the prevalence of either party.

THE advantage, which might be made of these confusions, was easily perceived in England; and according to the maxims, which usually prevail

C H A P.

XIX.

1415.

C H A P. among nations, it was determined to lay hold of
XIX. the favorable opportunity. The late king, who
1415. was courted by both the French parties, fomented
the quarrel, by alternately sending assistance to
each; but the present sovereign, impelled by the
vigor of youth and the ardor of ambition, determined to push his advantages to a greater length, and to carry violent war into that distracted kingdom. But while he was making preparations for this end, he tried to effect his purpose by negotiation; and he sent over embassadors to Paris, offering a perpetual peace and alliance; but demanding Catharine, the French king's daughter, in marriage, two millions of crowns as her portion, one million six hundred thousand as the arrears of king John's ransom, and the immediate possession and full sovereignty of Normandy and of all the other provinces, which had been ravished from England by the arms of Philip Augustus; together with the superiority of Brittany and Flanders¹⁹. Such exorbitant demands show, that he was sensible of the present miserable condition of France; and the terms, offered by the French court, though much inferior, discover their consciousness of the same melancholy truth. They were willing to give him the princess in marriage, to pay him eight hundred thousand crowns, to resign the entire sovereignty of Guienne, and to annex to that province the country of Perigord, Rovergue,

¹⁹ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 208.

Xaintonge, the Angoumois, and other territories²⁰. As Henry rejected these conditions, and scarcely hoped that his own demands would be complied with, he never intermitted a moment his preparations for war, and having assembled a great fleet and army at Southampton, having invited all the nobility and military men of the kingdom to attend him by the hopes of glory and of conquest, he came to the sea-side, with a purpose of embarking on his expedition.

But while Henry was meditating conquests upon his neighbours, he unexpectedly found himself in danger from a conspiracy at home, which was happily detected in its infancy. The earl of Cambridge, second son of the late duke of York, having espoused the sister of the earl of Marche, had zealously embraced the interests of that family; and had held some conferences with lord Scrope of Masham, and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, about the means of recovering to that nobleman his right to the crown of England. The conspirators, as soon as detected, acknowledged their guilt to the king²¹; and Henry

²⁰ Ibid. p. 211. It is reported by some historians (see Hist. Coryl. Cont. p. 500) that the Dauphin, in derision of Henry's claims and dissolute character, sent him a box of tennis balls: intimating that these implements of play were better adapted to him than the instruments of war. But this story is by no means credible; the great offers made by the court of France, show that they had already entertained a just idea of Henry's character, as well as of their own situation.

²¹ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 300. T. Livii, p. 8.

C H A P. proceeded without delay to their trial and con-
 XIX. demnation. The utmost that could be expected
 14.5. of the best king in those ages, was, that he would
 so far observe the essentials of justice, as not to
 make an innocent person a victim to his severity:
 But as to the formalities of law, which are often
 as material as the essentials themselves, they were
 sacrificed without scruple to the least interest or
 convenience. A jury of commoners was sum-
 moned: The three conspirators were indicted
 before them: The constable of Southampton
 castle swore, that they had separately confessed
 their guilt to him: Without other evidence, Sir
 Thomas Grey was condemned and executed:
 But as the earl of Cambridge and lord Scrope,
 pleaded the privilege of their peerage, Henry
 thought proper to summon a court of eighteen
 barons, in which the duke of Clarence presided.
 The evidence, given before the jury, was read
 to them: The prisoners, though one of them
 was a prince of the blood, were not examined,
 nor produced in court, nor heard in their own
 defence; but received sentence of death upon this
 proof, which was every way irregular and un-
 satisfactory, and the sentence was soon after
 executed. The earl of Marche was accused of
 having given his approbation to the conspiracy,
 and received a general pardon from the king²².
 He was probably either innocent of the crime

²² Rymer, vol. ix. p. 303.

imputed to him, or had made reparation by his early repentance and discovery ²³.

THE successes, which the arms of England have, in different ages, obtained over those of France, have been much owing to the favorable situation of the former kingdom. The English, happily seated in an island, could make advantage of every misfortune which attended their neighbours, and were little exposed to the danger of reprisals. They never left their own country, but when they were conducted by a king of extraordinary genius, or found their enemy divided by intestine factions, or were supported by a powerful alliance on the continent; and as all these circumstances concurred at present to favor their enterprise, they had reason to expect from it proportionable success. The duke of Burgundy, expelled France by a combination of the princes, had been secretly soliciting the alliance of England ²⁴; and Henry knew, that this prince, though he scrupled at first to join the inveterate enemy of his country, would willingly, if he saw any probability of success, both assist him with his Flemish subjects, and draw over to the same side all his numerous partisans in France. Trusting therefore to this circumstance, but without establishing any concert with the duke, he put to sea, and landed near Harfleur, at the head of an army of 6000 men at arms, and 24,000 foot, mostly archers. He immediately began the siege of that place, which was

C H A P.

XIX.

1415.

Invasion of
France.

14th Aug.

²³ St. Remi, chap. lv. Goodwin, p. 65.

²⁴ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 137, 138.

C H A P.
XIX.
1415.

valiantly defended by d'Estouteville, and under him by de Guitri, de Gaucourt, and others of the French nobility: But as the garrison was weak, and the fortifications in bad repair, the governor was at last obliged to capitulate; and he promised to surrender the place if he received no succour before the eighteenth of September. The day came, and there was no appearance of a French army to relieve him. Henry, taking possession of the town, placed a garrison in it, and expelled all the French inhabitants, with an intention of peopling it anew with English.

THE fatigues of this siege, and the unusual heat of the season, had so wasted the English army, that Henry could enter on no farther enterprise; and was obliged to think of returning into England. He had dismissed his transports, which could not anchor in an open road upon the enemy's coasts: And he lay under a necessity of marching by land to Calais, before he could reach a place of safety. A numerous French army of 14,000 men at arms and 40,000 foot was by this time assembled in Normandy under the constable d'Albret; a force, which, if prudently conducted, was sufficient either to trample down the English in the open field, or to harass and reduce to nothing their small army, before they could finish so long and difficult a march. Henry, therefore, cautiously offered to sacrifice his conquest of Harfleur for a safe passage to Calais; but his proposal being rejected, he determined to make his way by valor and conduct through all

the opposition of the enemy ²⁵. That he might not discourage his army by the appearance of flight, or expose them to those hazards which naturally attend precipitate marches, he made slow and deliberate journies ²⁶, till he reached the Somme, which he purposed to pass at the ford of Blanquetague, the same place where Edward, in a like situation, had before escaped from Philip de Valois. But he found the ford rendered impassable by the precaution of the French general, and guarded by a strong body on the opposite bank ²⁷; and he was obliged to march higher up the river, in order to seek for a safe passage. He was continually harassed on his march by flying parties of the enemy; saw bodies of troops on the other side ready to oppose every attempt; his provisions were cut off; his soldiers languished with sickness and fatigue; and his affairs seemed to be reduced to a desperate situation: When he was so dexterous or so fortunate as to seize by surprise a passage near St. Quintin, which had not been sufficiently guarded; and he safely carried over his army ²⁸.

C H A P.
XIX.
1415.

HENRY then bent his march northwards to Calais; but he was still exposed to great and imminent danger from the enemy, who had also passed the Somme, and threw themselves full in his way, with a purpose of intercepting his retreat. After he had passed the small river of Ternois at

Battle of
Azincour.

25th Oct.

²⁵ Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 6.

²⁶ T. Livii, p. 12.

²⁷ St. Remi, chap. 58.

²⁸ T. Livii, p. 13.

C H A P. Blangi, he was surpris'd to observe from the
XIX. heights the whole French army drawn up in the
1415. plains of Azincour, and so posted that it was
 impossible for him to proceed on his march,
 without coming to an engagement. Nothing in
 appearance could be more unequal than the battle,
 upon which his safety and all his fortunes now
 depended. The English army was little more
 than half the number, which had disembarked at
 Harfleur; and they labored under every discouragement
 and necessity. The enemy was four times
 more numerous; was headed by the dauphin and
 all the princes of the blood; and was plentifully
 supplied with provisions of every kind. Henry's
 situation was exactly similar to that of Edward at
 Cressy, and that of the Black Prince at Poitiers;
 and the memory of these great events, inspiring
 the English with courage, made them hope for
 a like deliverance from their present difficulties.
 The king likewise observed the same prudent
 conduct which had been followed by these great
 commanders: He drew up his army on a narrow
 ground between two woods, which guarded each
 flank; and he patiently expected in that posture
 the attack of the enemy²⁹.

HAD the French constable been able, either to
 reason justly upon the present circumstances of
 the two armies, or to profit by past experience,
 he had declined a combat, and had waited, till
 necessity, obliging the English to advance, had

²⁹ St. Remi, chap. 62.

made them relinquish the advantages of their situation. But the impetuous valor of the nobility, and a vain confidence in superior numbers, brought on this fatal action, which proved the source of infinite calamities to their country. The French archers on horseback and their men at arms, crowded in their ranks, advanced upon the English archers, who had fixed pallisadoes in their front to break the impression of the enemy, and who safely plied them, from behind that defence, with a shower of arrows, which nothing could resist³⁰. The clay soil, moistened by some rain, which had lately fallen, proved another obstacle to the force of the French cavalry: The wounded men and horses discomposed their ranks: The narrow compass, in which they were pent, hindered them from recovering any order: The whole army was a scene of confusion, terror, and dismay: And Henry, perceiving his advantage, ordered the English archers, who were light and unincumbered, to advance upon the enemy, and seize the moment of victory. They fell with their battle-axes upon the French, who, in their present posture, were incapable either of flying or of making defence: They hewed them in pieces without resistance³¹: And being seconded by the men at arms, who also pushed on against the enemy, they covered the field with the killed,

C H A P.

XIX.

1415.

³⁰ Walsingham, p. 392. T. Livii, p. 19. Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 7. Monstrelet, chap. 147. ³¹ Walsingham, p. 393. Ypod. Neust. p. 584.

C H A P. wounded, dismounted, and overthrown. After
XIX. all appearance of opposition was over, the Eng-
1415. lish had leisure to make prisoners; and having
advanced with uninterrupted success to the open
plain, they there saw the remains of the French
rear-guard, which still maintained the appear-
ance of a line of battle. At the same time, they
heard an alarm from behind: Some gentlemen of
Picardy, having collected about 600 peasants,
had fallen upon the English baggage, and were
doing execution on the unarmed followers of the
camp, who fled before them. Henry, seeing the
enemy on all sides of him, began to entertain
apprehensions from his prisoners; and he thought
it necessary to issue general orders for putting
them to death: But on discovering the truth, he
stopped the slaughter, and was still able to save
a great number.

No battle was ever more fatal to France, by
the number of princes and nobility, slain or taken
prisoners. Among the former were the constable
himself, the count of Nevers and the duke of
Brabant, brothers to the duke of Burgundy, the
count of Vaudemont, brother to the duke of
Lorraine, the duke of Alençon, the duke of
Barre, the count of Marle. The most eminent
prisoners were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon,
the counts d'Eu, Vendôme, and Richemont, and
the marshal of Boucicaut. An archbishop of
Sens also was slain in this battle. The killed are
computed on the whole to have amounted to
ten thousand men; and as the slaughter fell chiefly

upon the cavalry, it is pretended, that, of these, eight thousand were gentlemen. Henry was master of 14,000 prisoners. The person of chief note, who fell among the English, was the duke of York, who perished fighting by the king's side, and had an end more honorable than his life. He was succeeded in his honors and fortune by his nephew, son of the earl of Cambridge, executed in the beginning of the year. All the English, who were slain, exceeded not forty; though some writers, with greater probability, make the number more considerable.

THE three great battles of Cressy, Poitiers, and Azincour bear a singular resemblance to each other, in their most considerable circumstances. In all of them, there appears the same temerity in the English princes, who, without any object of moment, merely for the sake of plunder, had ventured so far into the enemies' country as to leave themselves no retreat; and unless saved by the utmost imprudence in the French commanders, were, from their very situation, exposed to inevitable destruction. But allowance being made for this temerity, which, according to the irregular plans of war, followed in those ages, seems to have been, in some measure, unavoidable; there appears, in the day of action, the same presence of mind, dexterity, courage, firmness, and precaution on the part of the English: The same precipitation, confusion, and vain confidence on the part of the French: And the events were such as might have been expected from such

C H A P. XIX. 1415. opposite conduct. The immediate consequences too of these three great victories were similar: Instead of pushing the French with vigor, and taking advantage of their consternation, the English princes, after their victory, seem rather to have relaxed their efforts, and to have allowed the enemy leisure to recover from his losses. Henry interrupted not his march a moment after the battle of Azincour; he carried his prisoners to Calais, thence to England; he even concluded a truce with the enemy; and it was not till after an interval of two years that any body of English troops appeared in France.

THE poverty of all the European princes, and the small resources of their kingdoms, were the cause of these continual interruptions in their hostilities; and though the maxims of war were in general destructive, their military operations were mere incursions, which, without any settled plan, they carried on against each other. The lustre, however, attending the victory of Azincour, procured some supplies from the English parliament; though still unequal to the expences of a campaign. They granted Henry an entire fifteenth of moveables; and they conferred on him *for life* the duties of tonnage and poundage, and the subsidies on the exportation of wool and leather. This concession is more considerable than that which had been granted to Richard II. by his last parliament, and which was afterwards, on his deposition, made so great an article of charge against him.

BUT during this interruption of hostilities from England, France was exposed to all the furies of civil war; and the several parties became every day more enraged against each other. The duke of Burgundy, confident that the French ministers and generals were entirely discredited by the misfortune at Azincour, advanced with a great army to Paris, and attempted to re-instate himself in possession of the government, as well as of the person of the king. But his partisans in that city were overawed by the court, and kept in subjection: The duke despaired of success; and he retired with his forces, which he immediately disbanded in the Low-Countries³². He was soon after invited to make a new attempt, by some violent quarrels, which broke out in the royal family. The queen, Isabella, daughter of the duke of Bavaria, who had been hitherto an inveterate enemy to the Burgundian faction, had received a great injury from the other party, which the implacable spirit of that princess was never able to forgive. The public necessities obliged the count of Armagnac, created constable of France in the place of d'Albret, to seize the great treasures which Isabella had amassed: and when she expressed her displeasure at this injury, he inspired into the weak mind of the king some jealousies concerning her conduct, and pushed him to seize, and put to the torture, and afterwards throw into the Seine, Bois-bourdon, her

C H A P.

XIX.

State of
France.

1417

³² Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 10.

C H A P. favorite , whom he accused of a commerce of
 XIX. gallantry with that princess. The queen herself
 1417. was sent to Tours, and confined under a guard³³; and after suffering these multiplied insults, she no longer scrupled to enter into a correspondence with the duke of Burgundy. As her son, the dauphin Charles, a youth of sixteen, was entirely governed by the faction of Armagnac, she extended her animosity to him, and sought his destruction with the most unrelenting hatred. She had soon an opportunity of rendering her unnatural purpose effectual. The duke of Burgundy, in concert with her, entered France at the head of a great army: He made himself master of Amiens, Abbeville, Dourlens, Montreuil, and other towns in Picardy; Senlis, Rheims, Chalons, Troye, and Auxerre, declared themselves of his party³⁴. He got possession of Beaumont, Pontoise, Vernon, Meulant, Montlheri, towns in the neighbourhood of Paris, and carrying farther his progress towards the west, he seized Etampes, Chartres, and other fortresses; and was at last able to deliver the queen, who fled to Troye, and openly declared against those ministers, who, she said, detained her husband in captivity³⁵.

MEANWHILE, the partisans of Burgundy raised a commotion in Paris, which always inclined to that faction. Lile - Adam, one of the duke's

³³ St. Remi, chap. 74. Monstrelet, chap. 167.

³⁴ St. Remi, chap. 79. ³⁵ Ibid. chap. 81. Monstrelet, chap. 178, 179.

captains, was received into the city in the night-time, and headed the insurrection of the people, which in a moment became so impetuous, that nothing could oppose it. The person of the king was seized: The dauphin made his escape with difficulty: Great numbers of the faction of Armagnac were immediately butchered: The count himself, and many persons of note, were thrown into prison: Murders were daily committed from private animosity, under pretence of faction: And the populace, not fatiated with their fury, and deeming the course of public justice too dilatory, broke into the prisons, and put to death the count of Armagnac, and all the other nobility who were there confined ³⁶.

C H A P.
XIX.

WHILE France was in such furious combustion, and was so ill prepared to resist a foreign enemy, Henry, having collected some treasure, and levied an army, landed in Normandy at the head of 25,000 men; and met with no considerable opposition from any quarter. He made himself master of Falaise; Evreux and Caen submitted to him; Pont de l'Arche opened its gates; and Henry having subdued all the Lower Normandy, and having received a reinforcement of 15,000 men from England ³⁷, formed the siege of Rouen, which was defended by a garrison of 4000 men, seconded by the inhabitants, to the number of 15,000 ³⁸. The cardinal des Ursins here attempted

New invasion of
France.
1st August.

1418.

³⁶ St. Remi, chap. 85, 86. Monstrelet, chap. 118.

³⁷ Walsingham, p. 400. ³⁸ St. Remi, chap. 91.

C H A P. to incline him towards peace, and to moderate
 XIX. his pretensions: But the king replied to him in
 1418. such terms as shewed that he was fully sensible
 of all his present advantages: "Do you not see,"
 said he, "that God has led me hither as by the
 "hand? France has no sovereign, I have just
 "pretensions to that kingdom: Every thing is
 "here in the utmost confusion: No one thinks
 "of resisting me. Can I have a more sensible
 "proof, that the Being, who disposes of empires,
 "has determined to put the crown of France
 "upon my head"? "

BUT though Henry had opened his mind to
 this scheme of ambition, he still continued to
 negotiate with his enemies, and endeavoured to
 obtain more secure, though less considerable ad-
 vantages. He made at the same time, offers of
 peace to both parties; to the queen and duke of
 Burgundy on the one hand, who, having pos-
 session of the king's person, carried the appearance
 of legal authority ³⁹; and to the dauphin on the
 other, who, being the undoubted heir of the
 monarchy, was adhered to by every one that
 payed any regard to the true interests of their
 country ⁴¹. These two parties also carried on a
 continual negotiation with each other. The terms
 proposed on all sides were perpetually varying:
 The events of the war, and the intrigues of the
 cabinet, intermingled with each other: And the

³⁹ Juvenal des Ursins.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 626, etc.

⁴⁰ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 717. 749.

fate of France remained long in this uncertainty. C H A P.
 After many negotiations, Henry offered the XIX.
 queen and the duke of Burgundy to make peace
 with them, to espouse the princess Catharine,
 and to accept of all the provinces ceded to Ed-
 ward III. by the treaty of Bretigni, with the
 addition of Normandy, which he was to receive
 in full and entire sovereignty ⁴². These terms
 were submitted to: There remained only some
 circumstances to adjust, in order to the entire
 completion of the treaty: But in this interval the
 duke of Burgundy secretly finished his treaty with
 the Dauphin; and these two princes agreed to
 share the royal authority during King Charles's
 lifetime, and to unite their arms in order to expel
 foreign enemies ⁴³. 1419.

THIS alliance, which seemed to cut off from
 Henry all hopes of farther success, proved in the
 issue the most favorable event that could have
 happened for his pretensions. Whether the Dauphin
 and the duke of Burgundy were ever sincere in
 their mutual engagements is uncertain; but very
 fatal effects resulted from their momentary and
 seeming union. The two princes agreed to an
 interview, in order to concert the means of
 rendering effectual their common attack on the
 English; but how both or either of them could
 with safety venture upon this conference, it
 seemed somewhat difficult to contrive. The
 assassination, perpetrated by the duke of Burgundy,

⁴² Rymer, vol. ix. p. 762.

⁴³ Ibid p. 776. St. Remi, chap. 95.

O H A P.

XIX.

1419.

and still more, his open avowal of the deed, and defence of the doctrine, tended to dissolve all the bands of civil society; and even men of honor, who detested the example, might deem it just, on a favorable opportunity, to retaliate upon the author. The duke, therefore, who neither dared to give, nor could pretend to expect any trust, agreed to all the contrivances for mutual security, which were proposed by the ministers of the dauphin. The two princes came to Montereau: The duke lodged in the castle: the dauphin in the town, which was divided from the castle by the river Yonne: the bridge between them was chosen for the place of interview: Two high rails were drawn across the bridge: The gates on each side were guarded, one by the officers of the dauphin, the other by those of the duke: The princes were to enter into the intermediate space by the opposite gates, accompanied each by ten persons; and with all these marks of diffidence, to conciliate their mutual friendship. But it appeared, that no precautions are sufficient, where laws have no place, and where all principles of honor are utterly abandoned. Tannegui de Chatel, and others of the dauphin's retainers, had been zealous partisans of the late duke of Orleans; and they determined to seize the opportunity of revenging on the assassin the murder of that prince: They no sooner entered the rails, than they drew their swords and attacked the duke of Burgundy: His friends were astonished, and thought not of making any defence; and all

Assassina-
tion of the
duke of Bur-
gundy.

of them either shared his fate, or were taken prisoners by the retinue of the dauphin⁴⁴.

C H A P.
XIX.

1419.

THE extreme youth of this prince made it doubtful whether he had been admitted into the secret of the conspiracy: But as the deed was committed under his eye, by his most intimate friends, who still retained their connexions with him, the blame of the action, which was certainly more imprudent than criminal, fell entirely upon him. The whole state of affairs was every where changed by this unexpected incident. The city of Paris, passionately devoted to the family of Burgundy, broke out into the highest fury against the dauphin. The court of king Charles entered from interest into the same views; and as all the ministers of that monarch had owed their preferment to the late duke, and foresaw their downfall if the dauphin should recover possession of his father's person, they were concerned to prevent by any means the success of his enterprise. The queen, persevering in her unnatural animosity against her son, increased the general flame, and inspired into the king, as far as he was susceptible of any sentiment, the same prejudices by which she herself had long been actuated. But above all, Philip count of Charolois, now duke of Burgundy, thought himself bound by every tie of honor and of duty, to revenge the murder of his father, and to prosecute the assassin to the utmost extremity. And in this

⁴⁴ St. Remi, chap. 97. Monstrelet, chap. 211.

C H A P. general transport of rage, every consideration of
XIX. national and family interest was buried in oblivion by all parties: The subjection to a foreign enemy, the expulsion of the lawful heir, the slavery of the kingdom, appeared but small evils, if they led to the gratification of the present passion.

THE king of England had, before the death of the duke of Burgundy, profited extremely by the distractions of France, and was daily making a considerable progress in Normandy. He had taken Roüen after an obstinate siege⁴⁵: he had made himself master of Pontoise and Gisors: He even threatened Paris, and by the terror of his arms, had obliged the court to remove to Troye: And in the midst of his successes, he was agreeably surprised, to find his enemies, instead of combining against him for their mutual defence, disposed to rush into his arms, and to make him the instrument of their vengeance upon each other. A league was immediately concluded at Arras between him and the duke of Burgundy. This prince, without stipulating any thing for himself, except the prosecution of his father's murder, and the marriage of the duke of Bedford with his sister, was willing to sacrifice the kingdom to Henry's ambition; and he agreed to every demand, made by that monarch. In order to finish this astonishing treaty, which was to transfer the crown of France to a stranger, Henry went to Troye, accompanied by his brothers, the

1420.

⁴⁵ T. Livii, p. 69. Monstrelet, chap. 201.

dukes

dukes of Clarence and Glocester; and was there met by the duke of Burgundy. The imbecility, into which Charles had fallen, made him incapable of seeing any thing but through the eyes of those who attended him; as they, on their part, saw every thing through the medium of their passions. The treaty, being already concerted among the parties, was immediately drawn, and signed, and ratified: Henry's will seemed to be a law throughout the whole negociation: Nothing was attended to but his advantages.

C H A P.

XIX.

1420.

THE principal articles of the treaty were, that Henry should espouse the princess Catharine: That king Charles, during his lifetime, should enjoy the title and dignity of king of France: That Henry should be declared and acknowledged heir of the monarchy, and be intrusted with the present administration of the government: That that kingdom should pass to his heirs general: That France and England should for ever be united under one king; but should still retain their several usages, customs, and privileges: That all the princes, peers, vassals, and communities of France, should swear, that they would both adhere to the future succession of Henry, and pay him present obedience as regent: That this prince should unite his arms to those of king Charles and the duke of Burgundy, in order to subdue the adherents of Charles, the pretended dauphin: And that these three princes should make no

Treaty of
Troye.

C H A P. peace or truce with him but by common consent
 XIX. and agreement ⁴⁶.
 1420.

SUCH was the tenor of this famous treaty; a treaty, which, as nothing but the most violent animosity could dictate it, so nothing but the power of the sword could carry into execution. It is hard to say, whether its consequences, had it taken effect, would have proved more pernicious to England or to France. It must have reduced the former kingdom to the rank of a province: It would have entirely disjointed the succession of the latter, and have brought on the destruction of every descendant of the royal family; as the houses of Orleans, Anjou, Alençon, Brittany, Bourbon, and of Burgundy itself, whose titles were preferable to that of the English princes, would on that account have been exposed to perpetual jealousy and persecution from the sovereign. There was even a palpable deficiency in Henry's claim, which no art could palliate. For besides the insuperable objections, to which Edward III's pretensions were exposed, *he* was not heir to that monarch: If female succession were admitted, the right had devolved on the house of Mortimer: Allowing, that Richard II. was a tyrant, and that Henry IVth's merits, in deposing him, were so great towards the English, as to justify that nation in placing him on the throne; Richard had nowise offended France,

⁴⁶ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 895. St. Remi, chap. 101. Monstrelet, chap. 223.

and his rival had merited nothing of that kingdom: It could not possibly be pretended, that the crown of France was become an appendage to that of England; and that a prince, who, by any means, got possession of the latter, was, without farther question, entitled to the former. So that on the whole it must be allowed, that Henry's claim to France was, if possible, still more unintelligible, than the title, by which his father had mounted the throne of England.

C H A P.
XIX.
1420.

BUT though all these considerations were overlooked, amidst the hurry of passion, by which the courts of France and Burgundy were actuated, they would necessarily revive during times of more tranquillity; and it behoved Henry to push his present advantages, and allow men no leisure for reason or reflection. In a few days after, he espoused the princess Catharine: He carried his father-in-law to Paris, and put himself in possession of that capital: He obtained from the parliament and the three estates a ratification of the treaty of Troye: He supported the duke of Burgundy in procuring a sentence against the murderers of his father: And he immediately turned his arms with success against the adherents of the dauphin, who, as soon as he heard of the treaty of Troye, took on him the style and authority of regent, and appealed to God and his sword for the maintenance of his title.

Marriage of
the king.

THE first place that Henry subdued, was Sens, which opened its gates after a slight resistance. With the same facility, he made himself master of

C H A P. Montereau. The defence of Melun was more
XIX. obstinate: Barbasan, the governor, held out for the space of four months against the besiegers; and it was famine alone which obliged him to capitulate. Henry stipulated to spare the lives of all the garrison, except such as were accomplices, in the murder of the duke of Burgundy; and as Barbasan himself was suspected to be of the number, his punishment was demanded by Philip: But the king had the generosity to intercede for him, and to prevent his execution⁴⁷.

142L

THE necessity of providing supplies both of men and money obliged Henry to go over to England; and he left the duke of Exeter, his uncle, governor of Paris during his absence. The authority, which naturally attends success: procured from the English parliament a subsidy of a fifteenth; but, if we may judge by the scantiness of the supply, the nation was nowise sanguine on their king's victories; and in proportion as the prospect of their union with France became nearer, they began to open their eyes, and to see the dangerous consequences, with which that event must necessarily be attended. It was fortunate for Henry, that he had other resources, besides pecuniary supplies from his native subjects. The provinces, which he had already conquered, maintained his troops; and the hopes of farther advantages allured to his standard all men of ambitious spirits in England, who desired to

⁴⁷ Holingshed, p. 577.

signalize themselves by arms. He levied a new army of 24,000 archers, and 4000 horsemen ⁴⁸, and marched them to Dover, the place of rendezvous. Every thing had remained in tranquillity at Paris, under the duke of Exeter; but there had happened in another quarter of the kingdom a misfortune, which hastened the king's embarkation.

C H A P.
XIX.
1421.

THE detention of the young king of Scots in England had hitherto proved advantageous to Henry; and by keeping the regent in awe, had preserved, during the whole course of the French war, the northern frontier in tranquillity. But when intelligence arrived in Scotland, of the progress made by Henry, and the near prospect of his succession to the crown of France, the nation was alarmed, and foresaw their own inevitable ruin, if the subjection of their ally left them to combat alone a victorious enemy, who was already so much superior in power and riches. The regent entered into the same views; and though he declined an open rupture with England, he permitted a body of seven thousand Scots, under the command of the earl of Buchan, his second son, to be transported into France for the service of the dauphin. To render this aid ineffectual, Henry had, in his former expedition, carried over the king of Scots, whom he obliged to send orders to his countrymen to leave the French service; but the Scottish general replied,

⁴⁸ Monstrelet, chap. 242.

C H A P. that he would obey no commands which came
 XIX. from a king in captivity, and that a prince,
 1421. while in the hands of his enemy, was nowise
 entitled to authority. These troops, therefore,
 continued still to act under the earl of Buchan;
 and were employed by the dauphin to oppose
 the progress of the duke of Clarence in Anjou.
 The two armies encountered at Baugé: The
 English were defeated: The duke himself was slain
 by Sir Allan Swinton, a Scotch knight, who
 commanded a company of men at arms: And the
 earls of Somerset⁴⁹, Dorset, and Huntingdon,
 were taken prisoners⁵⁰. This was the first action
 that turned the tide of success against the English,
 and the dauphin, that he might both attach the
 Scotch to his service, and reward the valor and
 conduct of the earl of Buchan, honored that
 nobleman with the office of constable.

BUT the arrival of the king of England, with
 so considerable an army, was more than sufficient
 to repair this loss. Henry was received at Paris
 with great expressions of joy; so obstinate were
 the prejudices of the people: And he immediately
 conducted his army to Chartres, which had long
 been besieged by the dauphin. That prince raised
 the siege on the approach of the English; and

⁴⁹ His name was John, and he was afterwards created
 duke of Somerset. He was grandson of John of Gaunt
 duke of Lancaster. The earl of Dorset was brother to
 Somerset, and succeeded him in that title.

⁵⁰ St. Remi, chap. 110. Monstrelet, chap. 239. Hall, fol. 76.

being resolved to decline a battle, he retired with his army ⁵¹. Henry made himself master of Dreux without a blow. He laid siege to Meaux at the solicitation of the Parisians, who were much incommoded by the garrison of that place. This enterprize employed the English arms during the space of eight months: The bastard of Vaurus, governor of Meaux, distinguished himself by an obstinate defence; but was at last obliged to surrender at discretion. The cruelty of this officer was equal to his bravery: He was accustomed to hang without distinction all the English and Burgundians who fell into his hands: And Henry, in revenge of his barbarity, ordered him immediately to be hanged on the same tree, which he had made the instrument of his inhuman executions ⁵².

C H A P.
XIX.
1421.

THIS success was followed by the surrender of many other places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which held for the dauphin: That prince was chased beyond the Loire, and he almost totally abandoned all the northern provinces: He was even pursued into the south by the united arms of the English and Burgundians, and threatened with total destruction. Notwithstanding the bravery and fidelity of his captains, he saw himself unequal to his enemies in the field; and found it necessary to temporize, and to avoid all hazardous actions

⁵¹ St. Remi, chap. 3. ⁵² Rymer, vol. x. p. 212.
T. Livii, p. 92. 93. St. Remi, chap. 116. Monstrelet,
chap. 260.

© H A P. with a rival, who had gained so much the ascendant over him. And to crown all the other prosperities of Henry, his queen was delivered of a son, who was called by his father's name, and whose birth was celebrated by rejoicings no less pompous, and no less sincere at Paris than at London. The infant prince seemed to be universally regarded as the future heir of both monarchies.

1422.

Death,

BUT the glory of Henry, when it had nearly reached the summit, was stopped short by the hand of nature; and all his mighty projects vanished into smoke. He was seized with a fistula, a malady, which the surgeons at that time had not skill enough to cure; and he was at last sensible, that his distemper was mortal, and that his end was approaching. He sent for his brother the duke of Bedford, the earl of Warwick, and a few noblemen more, whom he had honored with his friendship; and he delivered to them, in great tranquillity, his last will with regard to the government of his kingdom and family. He entreated them to continue, towards his infant son, the same fidelity and attachment, which they had always, professed to himself during his lifetime, and which had been cemented by so many mutual good offices. He expressed his indifference on the approach of death; and though he regretted, that he must leave unfinished a work so happily begun, he declared himself confident, that the final acquisition of France would be the effect of their prudence and valor. He left the regency of that kingdom to his elder brother, the duke of

Bedford; that of England to his younger, the duke of Gloucester; and the care of his son's person to the earl of Warwick. He recommended to all of them a great attention to maintain the friendship of the duke of Burgundy; and advised them never to give liberty to the French princes taken at Azincour, till his son were of age, and could himself hold the reins of government. And he conjured them, if the success of their arms should not enable them to place young Henry on the throne of France, never at least to make peace with that kingdom, unless the enemy, by the cession of Normandy, and its annexation to the crown of England, made compensation for all the hazard and expence of his enterprize⁵³.

HE next applied himself to his devotions, and ordered his chaplain to recite the seven penitential psalms. When that passage of the fifty-first psalm was read *build thou the walls of Jerusalem*; he interrupted the chaplain, and declared his serious intention, after he should have fully subdued France, to conduct a crusade against the infidels, and recover possession of the Holy Land⁵⁴. So ingenious are men in deceiving themselves, that Henry forgot, in those moments, all the blood spilt by his ambition; and received comfort from this late and feeble resolve, which, as the mode of these enterprises was now past, he certainly would never have carried into execution. He

C H A P.
XIX.
1422.

31st Aug.

⁵³ Monstrelet, chap. 265. Hall, fol. 80.

⁵⁴ St. Remi, chap. 118. Monstrelet, chap. 265.

C H A P. expired in the thirty-fourth year of his age and the
XIX. tenth of his reign.

1422.
and charac-
ter of the
king.

THIS prince possessed many eminent virtues ; and if we give indulgence to ambition in a monarch , or rank it, as the vulgar are inclined to do, among his virtues , they were unstained by any considerable blemish. His abilities appeared equally in the cabinet and in the field : The boldness of his enterprises was no less remarkable than his personal valor in conducting them. He had the talent of attaching his friends by affability , and of gaining his enemies by address and clemency. The English , dazzled by the lustre of his character , still more than by that of his victories , were reconciled to the defects in his title : The French almost forgot that he was an enemy : And his care in maintaining justice in his civil administration , and preserving discipline in his armies , made some amends to both nations for the calamities inseparable from those wars , in which his short reign was almost entirely occupied. That he could forgive the earl of Marche , who had a better title to the crown than himself , is a sure indication of his magnanimity ; and that the earl relied so entirely on his friendship is no less a proof of his established character for candor and sincerity. There remain in history few instances of such mutual trust ; and still fewer where neither party found reason to repent it.

THE exterior figure of this great prince , as well as his deportment , was engaging. His stature was somewhat above the middle size ; his

countenance beautiful ; his limbs genteel and slender, but full of vigor ; and he excelled in all warlike and manly exercises [“]. He left by his queen, Catharine of France, only one son, not full nine months old ; whose misfortunes, in the course of his life, surpassed all the glories and successes of his father.

C H A P.

XIX.

1422.

IN less than two months after Henry's death, Charles VI. of France, his father-in-law, terminated his unhappy life. He had, for several years, possessed only the appearance of royal authority: Yet was this mere appearance of considerable advantage to the English ; and divided the duty and affections of the French between them and the dauphin. This prince was proclaimed and crowned king of France at Poitiers, by the name of Charles VII. Rheims, the place where this ceremony is usually performed, was at that time in the hands of his enemies.

CATHARINE of France, Henry's widow, married, soon after his death, a Welsh gentleman, Sir Owen Tudor, said to be descended from the ancient princes of that country : She bore him two sons, Edmund and Jasper, of whom the eldest was created earl of Richmond ; the second earl of Pembroke. The family of Tudor, first raised to distinction by this alliance, mounted afterwards the throne of England.

THE long schism, which had divided the Latin church for near forty years, was finally terminated

Miscellaneous transactions.

[“] T. Livii, p. 4.

CHAP.
XIX.
1422.

in this reign by the council of Constance; which deposed the pope, John XXIII. for his crimes, and elected Martin V. in his place, who was acknowledged by almost all the kingdoms of Europe. This great and unusual act of authority in the council gave the Roman pontiffs ever after a mortal antipathy to those assemblies. The same jealousy, which had long prevailed in most European countries, between the civil aristocracy and monarchy, now also took place between these powers in the ecclesiastical body. But the great separation of the bishops in the several states, and the difficulty of assembling them, gave the pope a mighty advantage, and made it more easy for him to center all the powers of the hierarchy in his own person. The cruelty and treachery, which attended the punishment of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, the unhappy disciples of Wickliffe, who, in violation of a safe-conduct, were burned alive for their errors by the council of Constance, prove this melancholy truth, that toleration is none of the virtues of priests in any form of ecclesiastical government. But as the English nation had little or no concern in these great transactions, we are here the more concise in relating them.

THE first commission of array, which we meet with, was issued in this reign[“]. The military part of the feudal system, which was the most essential circumstance of it, was entirely dissolved;

[“] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 254, 255.

and could no longer serve for the defence of the kingdom. Henry, therefore, when he went to France in 1415, empowered certain commissioners to take in each county a review of all the freemen able to bear arms, to divide them into companies, and to keep them in readiness for resisting an enemy. This was the æra, when the feudal militia in England gave place to one which was perhaps still less orderly and regular.

WE have an authentic and exact account of the ordinary revenue of the crown during this reign; and it amounts only to 55,714 pounds 10 shillings and 10 pence a-year¹⁷. This is nearly the same with the revenue of Henry III. and the kings of England had neither become much richer nor poorer in the course of so many years. The ordinary expence of the government amounted to 42,507 pounds 16 shillings and 10 pence: So that the king had a surplus only of 13,206 pounds 14 shillings for the support of his household; for his wardrobe; for the expence of embassies; and other articles. This sum was nowise sufficient: He was therefore obliged to have frequent recourse to parliamentary supplies, and was thus, even in time of peace, not altogether independent of his people. But wars were attended with a great expence, which neither the prince's ordinary revenue, nor the extraordinary supplies were able to bear; and the sovereign was always reduced to many miserable shifts, in order to make any

C H A P.

XIX.

1422.

¹⁷ Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

C H A P. tolerable figure in them. He commonly borrowed
XIX. money from all quarters; he pawned his jewels
1422. and sometimes the crown itself ⁵⁸; he ran in arrears to his army; and he was often obliged, notwithstanding all these expedients, to stop in the midst of his career of victory, and to grant truces to the enemy. The high pay which was given to soldiers agreed very ill with his low income. All the extraordinary supplies, granted by parliament to Henry during the course of his reign, were only seven tenths and fifteenths, about 203,000 pounds ⁵⁹. It is easy to compute how soon this money must be exhausted by armies of 24,000 archers, and 6000 horse; when each archer had sixpence a-day ⁶⁰, and each horseman two shillings. The most splendid successes proved commonly fruitless, when supported by so poor a revenue; and the debts and difficulties, which the king thereby incurred, made him pay dear for his victories. The civil administration, likewise, even in time of peace, could never be very regular, where the government was so ill enabled to support itself. Henry till within a year of his death owed debts; which he had contracted when prince of Wales ⁶¹. It was in vain that the parliament pretended to restrain him from arbitrary practices,

⁵⁸ Rymer, vol. x. p. 190. ⁵⁹ Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 168. ⁶⁰ It appears from many passages of Rymer, particularly vol. ix. p. 258. that the king paid 20 marks a-year for an archer, which is a good deal above sixpence a day. The price had risen, as is natural, by raising the denomination of money. ⁶¹ Rymer, vol. x. p. 114.

when he was reduced to such necessities. Though the right of levying purveyance, for instance, had been expressly guarded against by the Great Charter itself, and was frequently complained of by the commons, it was found absolutely impracticable to abolish it; and the parliament at length, submitting to it as a legal prerogative, contented themselves with enacting laws to limit and confine it. The duke of Gloucester, in the reign of Richard II. possessed a revenue of 60,000 crowns, (about 30,000 pounds a-year of our present money,) as we learn from Froissard ⁶², and was consequently richer than the king himself, if all circumstances be duly considered.

It is remarkable, that the city of Calais alone was an annual expence to the crown of 19,119 pounds ⁶³; that is, above a third of the common charge of the government in time of peace. This fortress was of no use to the defence of England, and only gave that kingdom an inlet to annoy France. Ireland cost two thousand pounds a-year, over and above its own revenue; which was certainly very low. Every thing conspires to give us a very mean idea of the state of Europe in those ages.

FROM the most early times, till the reign of Edward III. the denomination of money had never been altered: A pound sterling was still a pound troy; that is, about three pounds of our present money. That conqueror was the first

⁶² Liv. iv. chap. 86.

⁶³ Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

C H A P. that innovated in this important article. In the
XIX. twentieth of his reign, he coined twenty-two
1422. shillings from a pound troy; in his twenty-seventh
year he coined twenty-five shillings. But Henry V.
who was also a conqueror, raised still farther the
denomination, and coined thirty shillings from a
pound troy⁶⁴: His revenue therefore must have
been about 110,000 pounds of our present money;
and by the cheapness of provisions, was equivalent
to above 330,000 pounds.

NONE of the princes of the house of Lancaster
ventured to impose taxes without consent of
parliament; Their doubtful or bad title became
so far of advantage to the constitution. The rule
was then fixed, and could not safely be broken
afterwards, even by more absolute princes.

⁶⁴ Fleetwood's *Chronicon Preciosum*, p. 52.

C H A P. XX.

H E N R Y V I.

Government during the minority — State of France — Military operations — Battle of Verneuil — Siege of Orleans — The maid of Orleans — The siege of Orleans raised — The king of France crowned at Rheims — Prudence of the duke of Bedford — Execution of the maid of Orleans — Defection of the duke of Burgundy — Death of the duke of Bedford — Decline of the English in France — Truce with France — Marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou — Murder of the duke of Gloucester — State of France — Renewal of the war with France — The English expelled France.

DURING the reigns of the Lancastrian princes, the authority of parliament seems to have been more confirmed, and the privileges of the people more regarded, than during any former period; and the two preceding kings, though men of great spirit and abilities, abstained from such exertions of prerogative, as even weak princes, whose title was undisputed, were tempted to think they might venture upon with impunity. The long minority, of which there was now the prospect, encouraged still farther the lords and commons to extend their influence; and without paying much regard to the verbal destination of

C H A P.
XX.
1422.

Govern-
ment during
the mino-
rity.

C H A P.

XX.

1422.

Henry V. they assumed the power of giving a new arrangement to the whole administration. They declined altogether the name of *Regent* with regard to England: They appointed the duke of Bedford *protector* or *guardian* of that kingdom, a title which they supposed to imply less authority: They invested the duke of Gloucester with the same dignity during the absence of his elder brother¹; and in order to limit the power of both these princes, they appointed a council, without whose advice and approbation no measure of importance could be determined². The person and education of the infant prince was committed to Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, his great uncle and the legitimated son of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster; a prelate, who, as his family could never have any pretensions to the crown, might safely, they thought, be intrusted with that important charge³. The two princes, the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, who seemed injured by this plan of government, yet, being persons of great integrity and honor, acquiesced in any appointment, which tended to give security to the public; and as the wars in France appeared to be the object of greatest moment, they avoided every dispute which might throw an obstacle in the way of foreign conquests.

State of
France.

WHEN the state of affairs between the English and French kings was considered with a superficial

¹ Rymer, vol. x. p. 261. Cotton, p. 564. ² Cotton, p. 564. ³ Hall, fol. 83. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 27.

eye, every advantage seemed to be on the side of the former; and the total expulsion of Charles appeared to be an event, which might naturally be expected from the superior power of his competitor. Though Henry was yet in his infancy, the administration was devolved on the duke of Bedford, the most accomplished prince of his age; whose experience, prudence, valor, and generosity qualified him for his high office, and enabled him both to maintain union among his friends, and to gain the confidence of his enemies. The whole power of England was at his command: He was at the head of armies enured to victory: He was seconded by the most renowned generals of the age, the earls of Somerset, Warwick, Salisbury, Suffolk, and Arundel, Sir John Talbot, and Sir John Fastolfe: And besides Guienne, the ancient inheritance of England, he was master of the capital, and of almost all the northern provinces, which were well enabled to furnish him with supplies both of men and money, and to assist and support his English forces.

BUT Charles, notwithstanding the present inferiority of his power, possessed some advantages derived partly from his situation, partly from his personal character, which promised him success, and served, first to control, then to overbalance, the superior force and opulence of his enemies. He was the true and undoubted heir of the monarchy: All Frenchmen, who knew the interests, or desired the independence of their country, turned their eyes towards him as its sole resource:

C H A P. XX. 1422. The exclusion given him, by the imbecillity of his father, and the forced or precipitate consent of the states, had plainly no validity: That spirit of faction, which had blinded the people, could not long hold them in so gross a delusion: Their national and inveterate hatred against the English, the authors of all their calamities, must soon revive, and inspire them with indignation at bending their necks under the yoke of that hostile people: Great nobles and princes, accustomed to maintain an independence against their native sovereigns, would never endure a subjection to strangers: And though most of the princes of the blood were, since the fatal battle of Azincour, detained prisoners in England, the inhabitants of their demesnes, their friends, their vassals, all declared a zealous attachment to the king, and exerted themselves in resisting the violence of foreign invaders.

CHARLES himself, though only in his twentieth year was of a character well calculated to become the object of these benevolent sentiments; and perhaps from the favor which naturally attends youth, was the more likely, on account of his tender age, to acquire the good-will of his native subjects. He was a prince of the most friendly and benign disposition, of easy and familiar manners, and of a just and sound, though not a very vigorous understanding. Sincere, generous, affable, he engaged from affection the services of his followers, even while his low fortunes might make it their interest to desert him; and the lenity of his temper could pardon in them those fallies

of discontent, to which princes in his situation are so frequently exposed. The love of pleasure often seduced him into indolence; but amidst all his irregularities the goodness of his heart still shone forth; and by exerting at intervals his courage and activity, he proved, that his general remissness proceeded not from the want, either of a just spirit of ambition, or of personal valor.

C H A P.

XX.

1422.

THOUGH the virtues of this amiable prince lay some time in obscurity, the duke of Bedford knew, that his title alone made him formidable, and that every foreign assistance would be requisite, ere an English regent could hope to complete the conquest of France; an enterprize, which, however it might seem to be much advanced, was still exposed to many and great difficulties. The chief circumstance, which had procured to the English all their present advantages, was the resentment of the duke of Burgundy against Charles; and as that prince seemed intent rather on gratifying his passion than consulting his interests, it was the more easy for the regent, by demonstrations of respect and confidence, to retain him in the alliance of England. He bent therefore all his endeavours to that purpose: He gave the duke every proof of friendship and regard: He even offered him the regency of France, which Philip declined: And that he might corroborate national connexions by private ties, he concluded his own marriage with the princess of Burgundy, which had been stipulated by the treaty of Arras.

C H A P.

XX.

1423.

BEING sensible, that next to the alliance of Burgundy, the friendship of the duke of Brittany was of the greatest importance towards forwarding the English conquests; and that, as the provinces of France, already subdued, lay between the dominions of these two princes, he could never hope for any security without preserving his connexions with them; he was very intent on strengthening himself also from that quarter. The duke of Brittany, having received many just reasons of displeasure from the ministers of Charles, had already acceded to the treaty of Troye, and had, with other vassals of the crown, done homage to Henry V. in quality of heir to the kingdom: But as the regent knew, that the duke was much governed by his brother, the count of Richemont, he endeavoured to fix his friendship, by paying court and doing services to this haughty and ambitious prince.

17th Avril.

ARTHUR, count of Richemont, had been taken prisoner at the battle of Azincour, had been treated with great indulgence by the late king, and had even been permitted on his parole to take a journey into Brittany, where the state of affairs required his presence. The death of that victorious monarch happened before Richemont's return; and this prince pretended, that, as his word was given personally to Henry V. he was not bound to fulfil it towards his son and successor: A chicane which the regent, as he could not force him to compliance, deemed it prudent to overlook. An interview, was settled at Amiens

between the dukes of Bedford, Burgundy, and Brittany, at which the count of Richemont was also present^{*}: The alliance was renewed between these princes: And the regent persuaded Philip to give in marriage to Richemont his eldest sister, widow of the deceased Dauphin, Lewis, the elder brother of Charles. Thus Arthur was connected both with the regent and the duke of Burgundy, and seemed engaged by interest to prosecute the same object, in forwarding the success of the English arms.

C H A P.

XX.

1423.

WHILE the vigilance of the duke of Bedford was employed in gaining or confirming these allies, whose vicinity rendered them so important, he did not overlook the state of more remote countries. The duke of Albani, regent of Scotland, had died; and his power had devolved on Murdac, his son, a prince of a weak understanding and indolent disposition; who, far from possessing the talents requisite for the government of that fierce people, was not even able to maintain authority in his own family, or restrain the petulance and insolence of his sons. The ardor of the Scots to serve in France, where Charles treated them with great honor and distinction, and where the regent's brother enjoyed the dignity of constable, broke out afresh under this feeble administration: New succours daily came over, and filled the armies of the French king: The earl of Douglas conducted a reinforcement of 5000 men to his assistance:

^{*} Hall, fol. 84. Monstrelet, vol. i. p. 4. Stowe, p. 364.

C H A P. XX. 1423. And it was justly to be dreaded, that the Scots, by commencing open hostilities in the north, would occasion a diversion still more considerable of the English power, and would ease Charles, in part, of that load, by which he was at present so grievously oppressed. The duke of Bedford, therefore, persuaded the English council to form an alliance with James their prisoner; to free that prince from his long captivity; and to connect him with England, by marrying him to a daughter of the earl of Somerset and cousin of the young king⁵. As the Scottish regent, tired of his present dignity, which he was not able to support, was now become entirely sincere in his applications for James's liberty, the treaty was soon concluded; a ransom of forty thousand pounds was stipulated⁶; and the king of Scots was restored to the throne of his ancestors, and proved, in his short reign, one of the most illustrious princes, that had ever governed that kingdom. He was murdered in 1437 by his traiterous kinsman the earl of Athole. His affections inclined to the side of France; but the English had never reason, during his life-time, to complain of any breach of the neutrality by Scotland.

Military
operations.

BUT the regent was not so much employed in these political negotiations as to neglect the operations of war, from which alone he could hope to succeed in expelling the French monarch.

⁵ Hall, fol. 86. Stowe, p. 364. Grafton, p. 501.

⁶ Rymer, vol. x. p. 299, 300. 326.

Though the chief feat of Charles's power lay in the southern provinces, beyond the Loire, his partisans were possessed of some fortresses in the northern, and even in the neighbourhood of Paris; and it behoved the duke of Bedford first to clear these countries from the enemy, before he could think of attempting more distant conquests. The castle of Dorsoy was taken after a siege of six weeks: That of Noyelle and the town of Rüe in Picardy underwent the same fate: Pont sur Seine, Vertus, Montaigu, were subjected by the English arms: And a more considerable advantage was soon after gained by the united forces of England and Burgundy. John Stuart, constable of Scotland, and the lord of Estissac had formed the siege of Crevant in Burgundy: The earls of Salisbury and Suffolk, with the count of Toulangeon, were sent to its relief: A fierce and well disputed action ensued: The Scots and French were defeated: The constable of Scotland and the count of Ventadour were taken prisoners: And above a thousand men, among whom was Sir William Hamilton, were left on the field of battle². The taking of Gaillon upon the Seine, and of la Charité upon the Loire, was the fruit of this victory: And as this latter place opened an entrance into the southern provinces, the acquisition of it appeared on that account of the greater importance to the duke of Bedford, and seemed to promise a successful issue to the war.

C H A P.

XX.

1423.

² Hall, fol. 85. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 8. Holingshed, p. 586. Grafton, p. 500.

C H A P.

XX.

1424.

THE more Charles was threatened with an invasion in those provinces which adhered to him, the more necessary it became, that he should retain possession of every fortress, which he still held within the quarters of the enemy. The duke of Bedford had besieged in person, during the space of three months, the town of Yvri in Normandy; and the brave governor, unable to make any longer defence, was obliged to capitulate; and he agreed to surrender the town, if, before a certain term, no relief arrived. Charles, informed of these conditions, determined to make an attempt for saving the place. He collected, with some difficulty, an army of 14,000 men, of whom one half were Scots; and he sent them thither under the command of the earl of Buchan, constable of France; who was attended by the earl of Douglas, his countryman, the duke of Alençon, the marshal de la Fayette, the count of Aumale, and the viscount of Narbonne. When the constable arrived within a few leagues of Yvri, he found that he was come too late, and that the place was already surrendered. He immediately turned to the left, and sat down before Verneuil, which the inhabitants, in spite of the garrison, delivered up to him^s. Buchan might now have returned in safety, and with the glory of making an acquisition no less important than the place which he was sent to relieve: But hearing of Bedford's approach, he called a council of war, in order to

^s Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 14. Grafton, p. 504.

deliberate concerning the conduct which he should hold in this emergence. The wiser part of the council declared for a retreat; and represented, that all the past misfortunes of the French had proceeded from their rashness in giving battle when no necessity obliged them; that this army was the last resource of the king, and the only defence of the few provinces which remained to him; and that every reason invited him to embrace cautious measures, which might leave time for his subjects to return to a sense of their duty, and give leisure for discord to arise among his enemies, who, being united by no common band of interest or motive of alliance, could not long persevere in their animosity against him. All these prudential considerations were overborne by a vain point of honor, not to turn their backs to the enemy; and they resolved to await the arrival of the duke of Bedford.

C H A P.

XX.

1424.

THE numbers were nearly equal in this action; and as the long continuance of war had introduced discipline, which, however imperfect, sufficed to maintain some appearance of order in such small armies, the battle was fierce, and well disputed, and attended with bloodshed on both sides. The constable drew up his forces under the walls of Verneuil, and resolved to abide the attack of the enemy: But the impatience of the viscount of Narbonne, who advanced precipitately, and obliged the whole line to follow him in some hurry and confusion, was the cause of the misfortune which ensued. The English archers, fixing their

27th Aug.
Battle of
Verneuil.

C H A P. XX. 1424. palisadoes before them, according to their usual custom, sent a volley of arrows amidst the thickest of the French army; and though beaten from their ground, and obliged to take shelter among the baggage, they soon rallied, and continued to do great execution upon the enemy. The duke of Bedford, meanwhile, at the head of the men at arms, made impression on the French, broke their ranks, chased them off the field, and rendered the victory entirely complete and decisive⁹. The constable himself perished in battle, as well as the earl of Douglas and his son, the counts of Aumale, Tonnerre, and Ventadour, with many other considerable nobility. The duke of Alençon, the marshal de la Fayette, the lords of Gaucour and Mortemar were taken prisoners. There fell about four thousand of the French, and sixteen hundred of the English; a loss esteemed, at that time, so unusual on the side of the victors, that the duke of Bedford forbade all rejoicings for his success. Verneuil was surrendered next day by capitulation¹⁰.

THE condition of the king of France now appeared very terrible, and almost desperate. He had lost the flower of his army and the bravest of his nobles in this fatal action: He had no resource either for recruiting or subsisting his troops: He wanted money even for his personal subsistence;

⁹ Hall, fol. 88, 89, 90. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 15. Stowe, p. 365. Holingshed, p. 588. ¹⁰ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 15.

and though all parade of a court was banished, it was with difficulty he could keep a table, supplied with the plainest necessaries, for himself and his few followers: Every day brought him intelligence of some loss or misfortune: Towns, which were bravely defended, were obliged at last to surrender for want of relief or supply: He saw his partisans entirely chased from all the provinces which lay north of the Loire: And he expected soon to lose, by the united efforts of his enemies, all the territories of which he had hitherto continued master; when an incident happened, which saved him on the brink of ruin, and lost the English such an opportunity for completing their conquests, as they never afterwards were able to recal.

JAQUELINE, countess of Hainault and Holland, and heir of these provinces, had espoused John duke of Brabant, cousin german to the duke of Burgundy; but having made this choice from the usual motives of princes, she soon found reason to repent of the unequal alliance. She was a princess of a masculine spirit and uncommon understanding; the duke of Brabant was of a sickly complexion and weak mind: She was in the vigor of her age; he had only reached his fifteenth year: These causes had inspired her with such contempt for her husband, which soon proceeded to antipathy, that she determined to dissolve a marriage, where, it is probable, nothing but the ceremony had as yet intervened. The court of Rome was commonly very open to applications

C H A P.

XX.

1424.

C H A P. of this nature, when seconded by power and
XX. money; but as the princess foresaw great opposi-
1424. tion from her husband's relations, and was impatient to effect her purpose, she made her escape into England, and threw herself under the protection of the duke of Gloucester. That prince, with many noble qualities, had the defect of being governed by an impetuous temper and vehement passions; and he was rashly induced, as well by the charms of the countess herself, as by the prospect of possessing her rich inheritance, to offer himself to her as a husband. Without waiting for a papal dispensation; without endeavouring to reconcile the duke of Burgundy to the measure; he entered into a contract of marriage with Jaqueline, and immediately attempted to put himself in possession of her dominions. Philip was disgusted with so precipitate a conduct: He resented the injury done to the duke of Brabant, his near relation: He dreaded to have the English established on all sides of him: And he foresaw the consequences, which must attend the extensive and uncontrouled dominion of that nation, if, before the full settlement of their power, they insulted and injured an ally, to whom they had already been so much indebted, and who was still so necessary for supporting them in their farther progress. He encouraged, therefore, the duke of Brabant to make resistance: He engaged many of Jaqueline's subjects to adhere to that prince: He himself marched troops to his support: And as the duke of Gloucester still

persevered in his purpose, a sharp war was suddenly kindled in the Low Countries. The quarrel soon became personal as well as political. The English prince wrote to the duke of Burgundy, complaining of the opposition made to his pretensions; and though in the main he employed amicable terms in his letter, he took notice of some falsehoods, into which, he said, Philip had been betrayed during the course of these transactions. This unguarded expression was highly resented: The duke of Burgundy insisted, that he should retract it: And mutual challenges and defiances passed between them on this occasion ¹¹.

THE duke of Bedford could easily foresee the bad effects of so ill-timed and imprudent a quarrel. All the succours, which he expected from England, and which were so necessary in this critical emergence, were intercepted by his brother, and employed in Holland and Hainault: The forces of the duke of Burgundy, which he also depended on, were diverted by the same wars: And besides this double loss, he was in imminent danger of alienating for ever that confederate, whose friendship was of the utmost importance, and whom the late king had enjoined him, with his dying breath, to gratify by every mark of regard and attachment. He represented all these topics to the duke of Gloucester: He endeavoured to mitigate the resentment of the duke of Burgundy: He interposed

¹¹ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 19, 20, 21.

C H A P. with his good offices between these princes: But
XX. was not successful in any of his endeavours; and he found, that the impetuosity of his brother's temper was still the chief obstacle to all accommodation ¹². For this reason, instead of pushing the victory gained at Verneuil, he found himself obliged to take a journey into England, and to try, by his counsels and authority, to moderate the measures of the duke of Gloucester.

1425. **THERE** had likewise broken out some differences among the English ministry, which had proceeded to great extremities, and which required the regent's presence to compose them ¹³. The bishop of Winchester, to whom the care of the king's person and education had been intrusted, was a prelate of great capacity and experience, but of an intriguing and dangerous character; and as he aspired to the government of affairs, he had continual disputes with his nephew, the protector; and he gained frequent advantages over the vehement and impolitic temper of that prince. The duke of Bedford employed the authority of parliament to reconcile them; and these rivals were obliged to promise, before that assembly, that they would bury all quarrels in oblivion ¹⁴. Time also seemed to open expedients for composing the difference with the duke of Burgundy. The credit of that prince had procured a bull

¹² Monstrelet, p. 18. ¹³ Stowe, p. 368. Holingshed, p. 590. ¹⁴ Hall, fol. 98, 99. Holingshed, p. 593, 594. Polydore Virgil, p. 466. Grafton, p. 512. 519.

from the pope ; by which not only Jaqueline's contract with the duke of Gloucester was annulled ; but it was also declared , that , even in case of the duke of Brabant's death , it should never be lawful for her to espouse the English prince Humphrey , despairing of success , married another lady of inferior rank , who had lived some time with him as his mistress ¹⁵. The duke of Brabant died ; and his widow , before she could recover possession of her dominions , was obliged to declare the duke of Burgundy her heir , in case she should die without issue , and to promise never to marry without his consent. But though the affair was thus terminated to the satisfaction of Philip , it left a disagreeable impression on his mind , It excited an extreme jealousy of the English , and opened his eyes to his true interests : And as nothing but his animosity against Charles had engaged him in alliance with them , it counterbalanced that passion by another of the same kind , which in the end became prevalent , and brought him back , by degrees , to his natural connexions with his family and his native country.

ABOUT the same time , the duke of Brittany began to withdraw himself from the English alliance. His brother , the count of Richmond , though connected by marriage with the dukes of Burgundy and Bedford , was extremely attached by inclination to the French interest ; and he willingly hearkened to all the advances which

¹⁵ Stowe , p. 367.



G H A P. Charles made him for obtaining his friendship.
 XX. The staff of constable, vacant by the earl of Buchan's death, was offered him; and as his martial and ambitious temper aspired to the command of armies, which he had in vain attempted to obtain from the duke of Bedford, he not only accepted that office, but brought over his brother to an alliance with the French monarch. The new constable, having made this one change in his measures, firmly adhered ever after to his engagements with France. Though his pride and violence, which would admit of no rival in his master's confidence, and even prompted him to assassinate the other favorites, had so much disgusted Charles, that he once banished him the court, and refused to admit him to his presence, he still acted with vigor for the service of that monarch, and obtained at last, by his perseverance, the pardon of all past offences.

1426.

IN this situation, the duke of Bedford, on his return, found the affairs of France, after passing eight months in England. The duke of Burgundy was much disgusted. The duke of Brittany had entered into engagements with Charles, and had done homage to that prince for his dutchy. The French had been allowed to recover from the astonishment, into which their frequent disasters had thrown them. An incident too had happened, which served extremely to raise their courage. The earl of Warwic had besieged Montargis with a small army of 3000 men, and the place was reduced to extremity, when the bastard of Orleans

undertook to throw relief into it. This general, who was natural son to the prince assassinated by the duke of Burgundy, and who was afterwards created count of Dunois, conducted a body of 1600 men to Montargis; and made an attack on the enemy's trenches with so much valor, prudence, and good fortune, that he not only penetrated into the place, but gave a severe blow to the English, and obliged Warwic to raise the siege¹⁶. This was the first signal action that raised the fame of Dunois, and opened him the road to those great honors, which he afterwards attained.

BUT the regent, soon after his arrival, revived the reputation of the English arms, by an important enterprize which he happily atchieved. He secretly brought together, in separate detachments, a considerable army to the frontiers of Brittany; and fell so unexpectedly upon that province, that the duke, unable to make resistance, yielded to all the terms required of him: He renounced the French alliance; he engaged to maintain the treaty of Troye; he acknowledged the duke of Bedford for regent of France; and promised to do homage for his dutchy to king Henry¹⁷. And the English prince, having thus freed himself from a dangerous enemy who lay behind him, resolved on an undertaking, which, if successful, would, he hoped, cast the balance between the two nations, and prepare the way for the final conquest of France.

¹⁶ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 32, 33. Holingshed, p. 597.

¹⁷ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 35, 36.

C H A P.

XX.

1428.

Siege of
Orleans.

THE city of Orleans was so situated between the provinces commanded by Henry, and those possessed by Charles, that it opened an easy entrance to either; and as the duke of Bedford intended to make a great effort for penetrating into the south of France, it behoved him to begin with this place, which, in the present circumstances, was become the most important in the kingdom. He committed the conduct of the enterprize to the earl of Salisbury, who had newly brought him a reinforcement of 6000 men from England, and who had much distinguished himself, by his abilities, during the course of the present war. Salisbury, passing the Loire, made himself master of several small places, which surrounded Orleans on that side¹⁸; and as his intentions were thereby known, the French king used every expedient to supply the city with a garrison and provisions, and enable it to maintain a long and obstinate siege. The lord of Gaucour, a brave and experienced captain, was appointed governor: Many officers of distinction threw themselves into the place: The troops, which they conducted, were inured to war, and were determined to make the most obstinate resistance: and even the inhabitants, disciplined by the long continuance of hostilities, were well qualified, in their own defence, to second the efforts of the most veteran forces. The eyes of all Europe were turned towards this scene; where, it was reasonably

¹⁸ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 38, 39. Polyd. Virg. p. 468.

supposed, the French were to make their last stand for maintaining the independence of their monarchy, and the rights of their sovereign.

C H A P.
XX.
1428.

THE earl of Salisbury at last approached the place with an army, which consisted only of 10,000 men; and not being able, with so small a force, to invest so great a city, that commanded a bridge over the Loire, he stationed himself on the southern side towards Sologne, leaving the other, towards the Beausse, still open to the enemy. He there attacked the fortifications, which guarded the entrance to the bridge; and after an obstinate resistance he carried several of them: But was himself killed by a cannon ball as he was taking a view of the enemy¹⁹. The earl of Suffolk succeeded to the command; and being reinforced with great numbers of English and Burgundians, he passed the river with the main body of his army, and invested Orleans on the other side. As it was now the depth of winter, Suffolk, who found it difficult, in that season, to throw up intrenchments all around, contented himself for the present, with erecting redoubts at different distances, where his men were lodged in safety, and were ready to intercept the supplies, which the enemy might attempt to throw into the place. Though he had several pieces of artillery in his camp, (and this is among the first sieges in Europe, where cannon were found to

¹⁹ Hall, fol. 105. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 39. Stowe, p. 369. Holingshed, p. 599. Grafton, p. 531.

C H A P.
XX.

be of importance,) the art of engineering was hitherto so imperfect, that Suffolk trusted more to famine than to force for subduing the city; and he purposed in the spring to render the circumvallation more complete, by drawing intrenchments from one redoubt to another. Numberless feats of valor were performed both by the besiegers and besieged during the winter: Bold sallies were made, and repulsed with equal boldness: Convoys were sometimes introduced and often intercepted: The supplies were still unequal to the consumption of the place: And the English seemed daily, though slowly, to be advancing towards the completion of their enterprize.

1429.

BUT while Suffolk lay in this situation, the French parties ravaged all the country around; and the besiegers, who were obliged to draw their provisions from a distance, were themselves exposed to the danger of want and famine. Sir John Fastolffe was bringing up a large convoy, of every kind of stores, which he escorted with a detachment of 2500 men; when he was attacked by a body of 4000 French, under the command of the counts of Clermont and Dunois. Fastolffe drew up his troops behind the waggons; but the French generals, afraid of attacking him in that posture, planted a battery of cannon against him, which threw every thing into confusion, and would have ensured them the victory; had not the impatience of some Scottish troops, who broke the line of battle, brought on an engagement, in which Fastolffe was victorious. The count of

Dunois was wounded ; and about 500 French c H A P.
 were left on the field of battle. This action, XX.
 which was of great importance in the present 1429.
 conjuncture, was commonly called the battle of
Herrings; because the convoy brought a great
 quantity of that kind of provisions, for the use
 of the English army during the Lent season ²⁰.

CHARLES seemed now to have but one expedient for saving this city, which had been so long invested. The duke of Orleans, who was still prisoner in England, prevailed on the protector and the council to consent, that all his demesnes should be allowed to preserve a neutrality during the war, and should be sequestered, for greater security, into the hands of the duke of Burgundy. This prince, who was much less cordial in the English interests than formerly, went to Paris, and made the proposal to the duke of Bedford; but the regent coldly replied, That he was not of a humor to beat the bushes, while others ran away with the game: An answer, which so disgusted the duke, that he recalled all the troops of Burgundy, that acted in the siege ²¹. The place however was every day more and more closely invested by the English: Great scarcity began already to be felt by the garrison and inhabitants: Charles, in despair of collecting an army, which should dare to approach the enemy's

²⁰ Hall, fol. 106. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 41, 42. Stowe, p. 369. Hollingshed, p. 600. Polyd. Virg. p. 469. Grafton, p. 532.

²¹ Hall, fol. 106. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Stowe, p. 369. Grafton, p. 533.

C H A P. XX. 1429. intrenchments, not only gave the city for lost, but began to entertain a very dismal prospect with regard to the general state of his affairs. He saw that the country, in which he had hitherto, with great difficulty, subsisted, would be laid entirely open to the invasion of a powerful and victorious enemy; and he already entertained thoughts of retiring with the remains of his forces into Languedoc and Dauphiny, and defending himself as long as possible in those remote provinces. But it was fortunate for this good prince, that, as he lay under the dominion of the fair, the women, whom he consulted, had the spirit to support his sinking resolution in this desperate extremity. Mary of Anjou, his queen, a princess of great merit and prudence, vehemently opposed this measure, which, she foresaw, would discourage all his partisans, and serve as a general signal for deserting a prince, who seemed himself to despair of success. His mistress too, the fair Agnes Sorel, who lived in entire amity with the queen, seconded all her remonstrances, and threatened, that, if he thus pusillanimously threw away the sceptre of France, she would seek in the court of England a fortune more correspondent to her wishes. Love was able to rouse in the breast of Charles that courage, which ambition had failed to excite: He resolved to dispute every inch of ground with an imperious enemy; and rather to perish with honor in the midst of his friends, than yield ingloriously to his bad fortune: When relief was unexpectedly brought

him by another female of a very different character, who gave rise to one of the most singular revolutions, that is to be met with in history.

C H A P.

XX.

1429.

The maid
of Orleans

IN the village of Domremi near Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine, there lived a country girl of twenty-seven years of age, called Joan d'Arc, who was servant in a small inn, and who in that station had been accustomed to tend the horses of the guests, to ride them without a saddle to the watering-place, and to perform other offices, which, in well-frequented inns, commonly fall to the share of the men servants²². This girl was of an irreproachable life, and had not hitherto been remarked for any singularity; whether that she had met with no occasion to excite her genius, or that the unskillful eyes of those who conversed with her, had not been able to discern her uncommon merit. It is easy to imagine, that the present situation of France was an interesting object even to persons of the lowest rank, and would become the frequent subject of conversation: A young prince, expelled his throne by the sedition of native subjects, and by the arms of strangers, could not fail to move the compassion of all his people, whose hearts were uncorrupted by faction; and the peculiar character of Charles, so strongly inclined to friendship and the tender passions, naturally rendered him the hero of that sex, whose generous minds know

²² Hall, fol. 107. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Grafton, p. 534.

C H A P. no bounds in their affections. The siege of
 XX. Orleans, the progress of the English before that
 1429. place, the great distress of the garrison and inhabitants, the importance of saving this city and its brave defenders, had turned thither the public eye; and Joan, inflamed by the general sentiment, was seized with a wild desire of bringing relief to her sovereign in his present distresses. Her unexperienced mind, working day and night on this favorite object, mistook the impulses of passion for heavenly inspirations; and she fancied, that she saw visions, and heard voices, exhorting her to re-establish the throne of France, and to expel the foreign invaders. An uncommon intrepidity of temper made her overlook all the dangers, which might attend her in such a path; and thinking herself destined by Heaven to this office, she threw aside all that bashfulness and timidity, so natural to her sex, her years, and her low station. She went to Vaucouleurs; procured admission to Baudricourt, the governor; informed him of her inspirations and intentions; and conjured him not to neglect the voice of God, who spoke through her, but to second those heavenly revelations, which impelled her to this glorious enterprise. Baudricourt treated her at first with some neglect; but on her frequent returns to him, and importunate solicitations, he began to remark something extraordinary in the maid, and was inclined, at all hazards, to make so easy an experiment. It is uncertain whether this gentleman had discernment enough to perceive, that great

use might be made with the vulgar of so uncommon an engine; or, what is more likely in that credulous age, was himself a convert to this visionary: But he adopted at last the schemes of Joan; and he gave her some attendants, who conducted her to the French court, which at that time resided at Chinon.

IT is the business of history to distinguish between the *miraculous* and the *marvellous*; to reject the first in all narrations merely profane and human; to doubt the second; and when obliged by unquestionable testimony, as in the present case, to admit of something extraordinary, to receive as little of it as is consistent with the known facts and circumstances. It is pretended, that Joan, immediately on her admission, knew the king, though she had never seen his face before, and though he purposely kept himself in the crowd of courtiers, and had laid aside every thing in his dress and apparel which might distinguish him: That she offered him, in the name of the supreme Creator, to raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct him to Rheims to be there crowned and anointed; and on his expressing doubts of her mission, revealed to him, before some sworn confidents, a secret, which was unknown to all the world beside himself, and which nothing but a heavenly inspiration could have discovered to her: And that she demanded, as the instrument of her future victories, a particular sword, which was kept in the church of St. Catharine of Fierbois, and which, though she had never seen it, she described

C H A P.

XX.

1429.

CHAP. by all its marks, and by the place in which it
 XX. had long lain neglected²³. This is certain, that
 1429. all these miraculous stories were spread abroad,
 in order to captivate the vulgar. The more the
 king and his ministers were determined to give
 into the illusion, the more scruples they pretended.
 An assembly of grave doctors and theologians
 cautiously examined Joan's mission, and pronounced
 it undoubted and supernatural. She was sent to
 the parliament, then residing at Poitiers; and
 was interrogated before that assembly: The pre-
 sidents, the counsellors, who came persuaded of
 her imposture, went away convinced of her in-
 spiration. A ray of hope began to break through
 that despair, in which the minds of all men were
 before enveloped. Heaven had now declared itself
 in favor of France, and had laid bare its out-
 stretched arm to take vengeance on her invaders.
 Few could distinguish between the impulse of
 inclination and the force of conviction; and none
 would submit to the trouble of so disagreeable a
 scrutiny.

AFTER these artificial precautions and prepara-
 tions had been for some time employed, Joan's
 requests were at last complied with: She was
 armed cap-a-pee, mounted on horseback, and
 shown in that martial habiliment before the whole
 people. Her dexterity in managing her steed,
 though acquired in her former occupation, was
 regarded as a fresh proof of her mission; and she

²³ Hall, fol. 107. Holingshed, p. 600.

was received with the loudest acclamations by the spectators. Her former occupation was even denied: She was no longer the servant of an inn. She was converted into a shepherdes, an employment much more agreeable to the imagination. To render her still more interesting, near ten years were substracted from her age; and all the sentiments of love and of chivalry, were thus united to those of enthusiasm, in order to inflame the fond fancy of the people with prepossessions in her favor.

WHEN the engine was thus dressed up in full splendor, it was determined to essay its force against the enemy. Joan was sent to Blois, where a large convoy was prepared for the supply of Orleans, and an army of ten thousand men, under the command of St. Severe, assembling to escort it. She ordered all the soldiers to confess themselves before they set out on the enterprize: She banished from the camp all women of bad fame: She displayed in her hands a consecrated banner; where the Supreme Being was represented, grasping the globe of earth, and surrounded with flower de luces. And she insisted in right of her prophetic mission; that the convoy should enter Orleans, by the direct road from the side of Beaufse: But the count of Dunois, unwilling to submit the rules of the military art to her inspirations, ordered it to approach by the other side of the river, where, he knew, the weakest part of the English army was stationed.

C II A P.
XX.
1429.

C H A P. **P**REVIOUS to this attempt, the maid had written
XX. to the regent and to the English generals before
1429. Orleans, commanding them, in the name of the
omnipotent Creator, by whom she was commis-
sioned, immediately to raise the siege and to
evacuate France; and menacing them with divine
vengeance in case of their disobedience. All the
English affected to speak with derision of the
maid and of her heavenly commission; and said,
that the French king was now indeed reduced
to a sorry pass, when he had recourse to such
ridiculous expedients: But they felt their imagina-
tion secretly struck with the vehement persuasion,
which prevailed in all around them; and they
waited with an anxious expectation, not unmixed
with horror, for the issue of these extraordinary
preparations.

As the convoy approached the river, a sally
was made by the garrison on the side of Beausse,
to prevent the English general from sending any
detachment to the other side: The provisions were
peaceably embarked in boats, which the inhabit-
ants of Orleans had sent to receive them: The
maid covered with her troops the embarkation:
Suffolk did not venture to attack her: And the
French general carried back the army in safety to
Blois; an alteration of affairs, which was already
visible to all the world, and which had a pro-
portional effect on the minds of both parties.

THE maid entered the city of Orleans, arrayed
in her military garb, and displaying her consecrated
standard; and was received, as a celestial deliverer,

by all the inhabitants. They now believed themselves invincible under her influence; and Dunois himself, perceiving such a mighty alteration both in friends and foes, consented, that the next convoy, which was expected in a few days, should enter by the side of Beaufle. The convoy approached: No sign of resistance appeared in the besiegers: The waggons and troops passed without interruption between the redoubts of the English: A dead silence and astonishment reigned among those troops, formerly so elated with victory, and so fierce for the combat.

THE earl of Suffolk was in a situation very unusual and extraordinary; and which might well confound the man of the greatest capacity and firmest temper. He saw his troops overawed, and strongly impressed with the idea of a divine influence, accompanying the maid. Instead of banishing these vain terrors by hurry and action and war, he waited till the soldiers should recover from the panic; and he thereby gave leisure for those prepossessions to sink still deeper into their minds. The military maxims, which are prudent in common cases, deceived him in these unaccountable events. The English felt their courage daunted and overwhelmed; and thence inferred a divine vengeance hanging over them. The French drew the same inference from an inactivity so new and unexpected. Every circumstance, was now reversed in the opinions of men, on which all depends: The spirit, resulting from a long course of uninterrupted success, was on a sudden transferred from the victors to the vanquished.

C H A P.

XX.

1429.

4th May.

C H A P.

XX.

1429.

THE maid called aloud, that the garrison should remain no longer on the defensive; and she promised her followers the assistance of heaven in attacking those redoubts of the enemy, which had so long kept them in awe, and which they had never hitherto dared to insult. The generals seconded her ardor: An attack was made on one redoubt, and it proved successful²⁴: All the English, who defended the intrenchments, were put to the sword or taken prisoners: And Sir John Talbot himself, who had drawn together, from the other redoubts, some troops to bring them relief, durst not appear in the open field against so formidable an enemy.

NOTHING after this success seemed impossible to the maid and her enthusiastic votaries. She urged the generals to attack the main body of the English in their intrenchments: But Dunois, still unwilling to hazard the fate of France by too great temerity, and sensible that the least reverse of fortune would make all the present visions evaporate, and restore every thing to its former condition, checked her vehemence, and proposed to her first to expel the enemy from their forts on the other side of the river, and thus lay the communication with the country entirely open, before she attempted any more hazardous enterprise. Joan was persuaded, and these forts were vigorously assailed. In one attack the French were repulsed; the maid was left almost alone;

²⁴ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 45.

she

she was obliged to retreat, and join the runaways; but displaying her sacred standard, and animating them with her countenance, her gestures, her exhortations, she led them back to the charge, and overpowered the English in their intrenchments. In the attack of another fort, she was wounded in the neck with an arrow; she retreated a moment behind the assailants; she pulled out the arrow with her own hands; she had the wound quickly dressed; and she hastened back to head the troops, and to plant her victorious banner on the ramparts of the enemy.

By all these successes, the English were entirely chased from their fortifications on that side: They had lost above six thousand men in these different actions; and what was still more important, their wonted courage and confidence was wholly gone, and had given place to amazement and despair. The maid returned triumphant over the bridge, and was again received as the guardian angel of the city. After performing such miracles, she convinced the most obdurate incredulity of her divine mission: Men felt themselves animated as by a superior energy, and thought nothing impossible to that divine hand, which so visibly conducted them. It was in vain even for the English generals to oppose with their soldiers the prevailing opinion of supernatural influence: they themselves were probably moved by the same belief: The utmost they dared to advance, was, that Joan was not an instrument of God; she was only the implement of the Devil: But as

C H A P. the English had felt, to their sad experience, that
 XX. the Devil might be allowed sometimes to prevail,
 1429. they derived not much consolation from the enforcing of this opinion.

The siege
 of Orleans
 raised.
 8th May.

It might prove extremely dangerous for Suffolk, with such intimidated troops, to remain any longer in the presence of so courageous and victorious an enemy; he therefore raised the siege, and retreated with all the precaution imaginable. The French resolved to push their conquests, and to allow the English no leisure to recover from their consternation. Charles formed a body of six thousand men, and sent them to attack Jergeau, whither Suffolk had retired with a detachment of his army. The siege lasted ten days; and the place was obstinately defended. Joan displayed her wonted intrepidity on the occasion. She descended into the fosse, in leading the attack; and she there received a blow on the head with a stone, by which she was confounded and beaten to the ground: But she soon recovered herself; and in the end rendered the assault successful: Suffolk was obliged to yield himself prisoner to a Frenchman called Renaud; but before he submitted, he asked his adversary, whether he were a gentleman. On receiving a satisfactory answer, he demanded, whether he were a knight. Renaud replied, that he had not yet attained that honor. *Then I make you one*, replied Suffolk: Upon which, he gave him the blow with his sword, which dubbed him into that fraternity; and he immediately surrendered himself his prisoner.

C H A P.

XX.

1429.

THE remainder of the English army was commanded by Fastolffe, Scales, and Talbot, who thought of nothing but of making their retreat, as soon as possible, into a place of safety; while the French esteemed the overtaking them equivalent to a victory. So much had the events, which passed before Orleans, altered every thing between the two nations! The vanguard of the French under Richemont and Xaintrailles attacked the rear of the enemy at the village of Patay. The battle lasted not a moment: The English were discomfited and fled: The brave Fastolffe himself showed the example of flight to his troops; and the order of the garter was taken from him, as a punishment for this instance of cowardice²⁵. Two thousand men were killed in this action; and both Talbot and Scales taken prisoners.

18th June

IN the account of all these successes, the French writers, to magnify the wonder, represent the maid (who was now known by the appellation of *the Maid of Orleans*) as not only active in combat, but as performing the office of general; directing the troops, conducting the military operations, and swaying the deliberations in all councils of war. It is certain, that the policy of the French court endeavoured to maintain this appearance with the public: But it is much more probable, that Dunois and the wiser commanders prompted her in all her measures, than that a country girl, without experience or education,

²⁵ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 46.

C H A P. could, on a sudden, become expert in a pro-
 XX. fession, which requires more genius and capacity,
 1429. than any other active scene of life. It is sufficient
 praise, that she could distinguish the persons on
 whose judgment she might rely; that she could
 seize their hints and suggestions, and, on a sudden,
 deliver their opinions as her own; and that she
 could curb, on occasion, that visionary and en-
 thusiastic spirit, with which she was actuated, and
 could temper it with prudence and discretion.

THE raising of the siege of Orleans was one
 part of the maid's promise to Charles: The
 crowning of him at Rheims was the other: And
 she now vehemently insisted, that he should forth-
 with set out on that enterprise. A few weeks
 before, such a proposal would have appeared the
 most extravagant in the world. Rheims lay in a
 distant quarter of the kingdom; was then in the
 hands of a victorious enemy; the whole road,
 which led to it, was occupied by their garrisons;
 and no man could be so sanguine as to imagine,
 that such an attempt could so soon come within
 the bounds of possibility. But as it was extremely
 the interest of Charles to maintain the belief of
 something extraordinary and divine in these events,
 and to avail himself of the present consternation
 of the English; he resolved to follow the exhorta-
 tions of his warlike prophets, and to lead his
 army upon this promising adventure. Hitherto
 he had kept remote from the scene of war: As
 the safety of the state depended upon his person,
 he had been persuaded to restrain his military

ardor: But observing this prosperous turn of affairs, he now determined to appear at the head of his armies, and to set the example of valor to all his foldiers. And the French nobility saw at once their young sovereign assuming a new and more brilliant character, seconded by fortune, and conducted by the hand of heaven; and they caught fresh zeal to exert themselves in replacing him on the throne of his ancestors.

C H A P.
XX.
1429.

CHARLES set out for Rheims at the head of twelve thousand men: He passed by Troye, which opened its gates to him: Chalons imitated the example: Rheims sent him a deputation with its keys, before his approach to it: And he scarcely perceived, as he passed along, that he was marching through an enemy's country. The ceremony of his coronation was here performed²⁶ with the holy oil, which a pigeon had brought to king Clovis from heaven, on the first establishment of the French monarchy: The maid of Orleans stood by his side, in complete armour, and displayed her sacred banner, which had so often dissipated and confounded his fiercest enemies: And the people shouted with the most unfeigned joy, on viewing such a complication of wonders. After the completion of the ceremony, the Maid threw herself at the king's feet, embraced his knees, and with a flood of tears, which pleasure and tenderness extorted from her, she congratulated him on this singular and marvellous event.

The king
of France
crowned at
Rheims.

17th July.

²⁶ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 48.

E H A P.

XX.

1429.

CHARLES, thus crowned and anointed, became more respectable in the eyes of all his subjects, and seemed, in a manner, to receive anew, from a heavenly commission, his title to their allegiance. The inclinations of men swaying their belief, no one doubted of the inspirations and prophetic spirit of the Maid: So many incidents, which passed all human comprehension, left little room to question a superior influence: And the real and undoubted facts brought credit to every exaggeration, which could scarcely be rendered more wonderful. Laon, Soissons, Chateau-Thierry, Provins, and many other towns and fortresses in that neighbourhood, immediately after Charles's coronation, submitted to him on the first summons; and the whole nation was disposed to give him the most zealous testimonies of their duty and affection.

Prudence of
the duke of
Bedford.

NOTHING can impress us with a higher idea of the wisdom, address, and resolution of the duke of Bedford, than his being able to maintain himself in so perilous a situation, and to preserve some footing in France, after the defection of so many places, and amidst the universal inclination of the rest to imitate that contagious example. This prince seemed present every where by his vigilance and foresight: He employed every resource, which fortune had yet left him: He put all the English garrisons in a posture of defence: He kept a watchful eye over every attempt among the French towards an insurrection: He retained the Parisians in obedience, by alternately employing caresses and severity: And knowing that

the duke of Burgundy was already wavering in his fidelity, he acted with so much skill and prudence, as to renew, in this dangerous crisis, his alliance with that prince; an alliance of the utmost importance to the credit and support of the English government.

THE small supplies which he received from England set the talents of this great man in still a stronger light. The ardor of the English for foreign conquests was now extremely abated by time and reflection: The parliament seems even to have become sensible of the danger, which might attend their farther progress; No supply of money could be obtained by the regent during his greatest distresses: And men enlisted slowly under his standard, or soon deserted, by reason of the wonderful accounts, which had reached England, of the magic, and sorcery, and diabolical power of the maid of Orleans ²⁷. It happened fortunately, in this emergency, that the bishop of Winchester, now created a cardinal, landed at Calais with a body of 5000 men, which he was conducting into Bohemia, on a crusade against the Hussites. He was persuaded to lend these troops to his nephew during the present difficulties ²⁸; and the regent was thereby enabled to take the field; and to oppose the French king, who was advancing with his army to the gates of Paris.

²⁷ Rymer, vol. x. p. 459. 472.

²⁸ Ibid. vol. x. p. 421.

C H A P.

XX.

1430.

THE extraordinary capacity of the duke of Bedford appeared also in his military operations. He attempted to restore the courage of his troops by boldly advancing to the face of the enemy; but he chose his posts with so much caution, as always to decline a combat, and to render it impossible for Charles to attack him. He still attended that prince in all his movements; covered his own towns and garrisons; and kept himself in a posture to reap advantage from every imprudence or false step of the enemy. The French army, which consisted mostly of volunteers, who served at their own expence, soon after retired and was disbanded: Charles went to Bourges, the ordinary place of his residence; but not till he made himself master of Compiègne, Beauvais, Senlis, Sens, Laval, Lagni, St. Denis, and of many places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which the affections of the people had put into his hands.

THE regent endeavoured to revive the declining state of his affairs, by bringing over the young king of England, and having him crowned and anointed at Paris²⁹. All the vassals of the crown, who lived within the provinces possessed by the English, swore new allegiance and did homage to him. But this ceremony was cold and insipid, compared with the lustre which had attended the coronation of Charles at Rheims; and the duke of Bedford expected more effect

²⁹ Rymer, vol. x. p. 432.

from an accident, which put into his hands the person that had been the author of all his calamities.

C H A P.

XX.

1430.

THE maid of Orleans, after the coronation of Charles, declared to the count of Dunois, that her wishes were now fully gratified, and that she had no farther desire than to return to her former condition, and to the occupations and course of life which became her sex: But that nobleman, sensible of the great advantages which might still be reaped from her presence in the army, exhorted her to persevere, till, by the final expulsion of the English, she had brought all her prophecies to their full completion. In pursuance of this advice, she threw herself into the town of Compiègne, which was at that time besieged by the duke of Burgundy, assisted by the earls of Arundel and Suffolk; and the garrison on her appearance believed themselves thenceforth invincible. But their joy was of short duration. The Maid, next day after her arrival, headed a sally upon the quarters of John of Luxembourg; she twice drove the enemy from their intrenchments; finding their numbers to increase every moment, she ordered a retreat; when hard pressed by the pursuers, she turned upon them, and made them again recoil; but being here deserted by her friends, and surrounded by the enemy, she was at last, after exerting the utmost valor, taken prisoner by the Burgundians³⁰. The common opinion was,

24th May.

³⁰ Stowe, p. 371.

C H A P. XX. that the French officers, finding the merit of every victory ascribed to her, had, in envy to her renown, by which they themselves were so much eclipsed, willingly exposed her to this fatal accident.

THE envy of her friends on this occasion was not a greater proof of her merit than the triumph of her enemies. A complete victory would not have given more joy to the English and their partisans. The service of *Te Deum*, which has so often been profaned by princes, was publicly celebrated on this fortunate event at Paris. The duke of Bedford fancied, that, by the captivity of that extraordinary woman, who had blasted all his successes, he should again recover his former ascendant over France; and to push farther the present advantage, he purchased the captive from John of Luxembourg, and formed a prosecution against her, which, whether it proceeded from vengeance or policy, was equally barbarous and dishonorable.

1431.

THERE was no possible reason, why Joan should not be regarded as a prisoner of war, and be entitled to all the courtesy and good usage, which civilised nations practise towards enemies on these occasions. She had never, in her military capacity, forfeited, by any act of treachery or cruelty, her claim to that treatment: She was unstained by any civil crime: Even the virtues and the very decorums of her sex had ever been rigidly observed by her: And though her appearing in war, and leading armies to battle, may

seem an exception, she had thereby performed such signal service to her prince, that she had abundantly compensated for this irregularity; and was, on that very account, the more an object of praise and admiration. It was necessary, therefore, for the duke of Bedford to interest religion some way in the prosecution; and to cover under that cloak his violation of justice and humanity.

C H A P.

XX.

1431.

THE bishop of Beauvais, a man wholly devoted to the English interests, presented a petition against Joan, on pretence that she was taken within the bounds of his diocese; and he desired to have her tried by an ecclesiastical court for sorcery, impiety, idolatry, and magic: The university of Paris was so mean as to join in the same request: Several prelates, among whom the cardinal of Winchester was the only Englishman, were appointed her judges: They held their court in Rouen, where the young king of England then resided: And the Maid, clothed in her former military apparel, but loaded with irons, was produced before this tribunal.

SHE first desired to be eased of her chains: Her judges answered, that she had once already attempted an escape by throwing herself from a tower: She confessed the fact, maintained the justice of her intention, and owned, that, if she could, she would still execute that purpose. All her other speeches showed the same firmness and intrepidity: Though harassed with interrogatories, during the course of near four months, she never betrayed any weakness or womanish submission;

C H A P.
XX.
1431.

and no advantage was gained over her. The point, which her judges pushed most vehemently, was her visions and revelations and intercourse with departed saints; and they asked her, whether she would submit to the church the truth of these inspirations: She replied, that she would submit them to God, the fountain of truth. They then exclaimed, that she was a heretic, and denied the authority of the church. She appealed to the pope: They rejected her appeal.

THEY asked her, why she put trust in her standard which had been consecrated by magical incantations: She replied, that she put trust in the Supreme Being alone, whose image was impressed upon it. They demanded, why she carried in her hand that standard at the anointment and coronation of Charles at Rheims: She answered, that the person who had shared the danger, was entitled to share the glory. When accused of going to war contrary to the decorums of her sex, and of assuming government and command over men; she scrupled not to reply, that her sole purpose was to defeat the English, and to expel them the kingdom. In the issue, she was condemned for all the crimes of which she had been accused, aggravated by heresy; her revelations were declared to be inventions of the devil to delude the people; and she was sentenced to be delivered over to the secular arm.

JOAN, so long surrounded by inveterate enemies, who treated her with every mark of contumely; brow-beaten and overawed by men of

superior rank, and men invested with the ensigns of a sacred character, which she had been accustomed to revere, felt her spirit at last subdued; and those visionary dreams of inspiration, in which she had been buoyed up by the triumphs of success and the applauses of her own party, gave way to the terrors of that punishment to which she was sentenced. She publicly declared herself willing to recant; she acknowledged the illusion of those revelations which the church had rejected; and she promised never more to maintain them. Her sentence was then mitigated; She was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and to be fed during life on bread and water.

ENOUGH was now done to fulfil all political views, and to convince both the French and the English, that the opinion of divine influence, which had so much encouraged the one and daunted the other, was entirely without foundation. But the barbarous vengeance of Joan's enemies was not satisfied with this victory. Suspecting, that the female dress, which she had now consented to wear, was disagreeable to her, they purposely placed in her apartment a suit of men's apparel; and watched for the effects of that temptation upon her. On the sight of a dress, in which she had acquired so much renown, and which, she once believed, she wore by the particular appointment of heaven, all her former ideas and passions revived; and she ventured in her solitude to cloath herself again in the forbidden garment. Her insidious enemies caught

C H A P.
XX.
1431.

C H A P. XX. her in that situation: Her fault was interpreted to be no less than a relapse into heresy: No recantation would now suffice, and no pardon could be granted her. She was condemned to be burned in the market-place of Rouen; and the infamous sentence was accordingly executed. This admirable heroine, to whom the more generous superstition of the ancients would have erected altars, was, on pretence of heresy and magic, delivered over alive to the flames, and expiated by that dreadful punishment the signal services which she had rendered to her prince and to her native country.

Execution
of the maid
of Orleans.
14th June.

1432.

THE affairs of the English, far from being advanced by this execution, went every day more and more to decay: The great abilities of the regent were unable to resist the strong inclination, which had seized the French to return under the obedience of their rightful sovereign, and which that act of cruelty was ill fitted to remove. Chartres was surprised, by a stratagem of the count of Dunois: A body of the English, under lord Willoughby, was defeated at St. Celerin upon the Sarthe³¹: The fair in the suburbs of Caen, seated in the midst of the English territories, was pillaged by de Lore, a French officer; The duke of Bedford himself was obliged by Dunois to raise the siege of Lagni with some loss of reputation: And all these misfortunes, though light, yet being continued and uninterrupted,

³¹ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 100.

brought discredit on the English, and menaced them with an approaching revolution. But the chief detriment, which the regent sustained, was by the death of his dutchess, who had hitherto preserved some appearance of friendship between him and her brother, the duke of Burgundy ³²: And his marriage soon afterwards, with Jaqueline of Luxembourg, was the beginning of a breach between them ³³. Philip complained, that the regent had never had the civility to inform him of his intentions, and that so sudden a marriage was a slight on his sister's memory. The cardinal of Winchester mediated a reconciliation between these princes and brought both of them to St. Omers for that purpose. The duke of Bedford here expected the first visit, both as he was son, brother, and uncle to a king, and because he had already made such advances as to come into the duke of Burgundy's territories, in order to have an interview with him: But Philip, proud of his great power and independent dominions, refused to pay this compliment to the regent: And the two princes, unable to adjust the ceremonial, parted without seeing each other ³⁴. A bad prognostic of their cordial intentions to renew past amity!

NOTHING could be more repugnant to the interests of the house of Burgundy, than to unite the crowns of France and England on the same

C H A P.

XX.

1432.

Defection of
the duke of
Burgundy.

³² Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 87. ³³ Stowe, p. 373. Grafton, p. 554. ³⁴ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 90. Grafton, p. 561.

C H A P. head ; an event , which , had it taken place ,
 XX. would have reduced the duke to the rank of a
 1432. petty prince , and have rendered his situation
 entirely dependent and precarious. The title also
 to the crown of France , which , after the failure
 of the elder branches , might accrue to the duke
 or his posterity , had been sacrificed by the treaty
 of Troye ; and strangers and enemies were thereby
 irrevocably fixed upon the throne. Revenge alone
 had carried Philip into these impolitic measures ;
 and a point of honor had hitherto induced him
 to maintain them. But as it is the nature of
 passion gradually to decay , while the sense of
 interest maintains a permanent influence and
 authority ; the duke had , for some years , appeared
 sensibly to relent in his animosity against Charles ,
 and to hearken willingly to the apologies made
 by that prince for the murder of the late duke of
 Burgundy. His extreme youth was pleaded in
 his favor ; his incapacity to judge for himself ;
 the ascendant gained over him by his ministers ;
 and his inability to resent a deed , which , without
 his knowledge , had been perpetrated by those
 under whose guidance he was then placed. The
 more to flatter the pride of Philip , the king of
 France had banished from his court and presence
 Tanegui de Chatel , and all those who were con-
 cerned in that assassination ; and had offered to
 make every other atonement , which could be
 required of him. The distress , which Charles
 had already suffered , had tended to gratify the
 duke's revenge ; the miseries , to which France
 had

had been so long exposed, had begun to move his compassion; and the cries of all Europe admonished him, that his resentment, which might hitherto be deemed pious, would, if carried farther, be universally condemned as barbarous and unrelenting. While the duke was in this disposition, every disgust, which he received from England, made a double impression upon him; the entreaties of the count of Richemont and the duke of Bourbon, who had married his two sisters, had weight; and he finally determined to unite himself to the royal family of France, from which his own was descended. For this purpose, a congress was appointed at Arras under the mediation of deputies from the pope and the council of Basle: The duke of Burgundy came thither in person: The duke of Bourbon, the count of Richemont, and other persons of high rank, appeared as ambassadors from France: And the English having also been invited to attend, the cardinal of Winchester, the bishops of Norwich and St. David's, the earls of Huntingdon and Suffolk, with others, received from the protector and council a commission for that purpose³⁵.

C H A P.
XX.

1433.

THE conferences were held in the abbey of St. Vaast; and began with discussing the proposals of the two crowns, which were so wide of each other as to admit of no hopes of accommodation. France offered to cede Normandy

August.

³⁵ Rymer, vol. x. p. 611, 612.

C H A P. XX. with Guienne, but both of them loaded with the usual homage and vassalage to the crown. As the claims of England upon France were universally unpopular in Europe, the mediators declared the offers of Charles very reasonable; and the cardinal of Winchester, with the other English ambassadors, without giving a particular detail of their demands, immediately left the congress. There remained nothing but to discuss the mutual pretensions of Charles and Philip. These were easily adjusted: The vassal was in a situation to give law to his superior; and he exacted conditions, which, had it not been for the present necessity, would have been deemed, to the last degree, dishonorable and disadvantageous to the crown of France. Besides making repeated atonements and acknowledgments for the murder of the duke of Burgundy, Charles was obliged to cede all the towns of Picardy which lay between the Somme and the Low Countries; he yielded several other territories; he agreed, that these and all the other dominions of Philip should be held by him, during his life, without doing any homage or swearing fealty to the present king; and he freed his subjects from all obligations to allegiance, if ever he infringed this treaty³⁶. Such were the conditions, upon which France purchased the friendship of the duke of Burgundy.

³⁶ Montrelet, vol. ii. p. 112. Grafton, p. 565.

THE duke sent a herald to England with a letter, in which he notified the conclusion of the treaty of Arras, and apologized for his departure from that of Troye. The council received the herald with great coldness: They even assigned him his lodgings in a shoemaker's house, by way of insult; and the populace were so incensed, that, if the duke of Gloucester had not given him guards, his life had been exposed to danger, when he appeared in the streets. The Flemings, and other subjects of Philip, were insulted, and some of them murdered by the Londoners; and every thing seemed to tend towards a rupture between the two nations³⁷. These violences were not disagreeable to the duke of Burgundy; as they afforded him a pretence for the farther measures which he intended to take against the English, whom he now regarded as implacable and dangerous enemies.

C H A P.
XX.
1435.

A FEW days after the duke of Bedford received intelligence of this treaty, so fatal to the interests of England, he died at Rouen; a prince of great abilities, and of many virtues; and whose memory, except from the barbarous execution of the maid of Orleans, was unfulled by any considerable blemish. Isabella, queen of France, died a little before him, despised by the English, detested by the French, and reduced in her later years to regard, with an unnatural horror, the progress and success of her own son, in recovering

14th Sept.
Death of the
duke of Bed-
ford.

³⁷ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 120. Hollingshed, p. 612.

C H A P. XX. possession of his kingdom. This period was also signalized by the death of the earl of Arundel³⁸, a great English general, who, though he commanded three thousand men, was foiled by Xaintrailles at the head of six hundred, and soon after expired of the wounds which he received in the action.

1436.

THE violent factions, which prevailed between the duke of Gloucester and the cardinal of Winchester, prevented the English from taking the proper measures for repairing these multiplied losses, and threw all their affairs into confusion. The popularity of the duke, and his near relation to the crown, gave him advantages in the contest, which he often lost by his open and unguarded temper, unfit to struggle with the politic and interested spirit of his rival. The balance, meanwhile, of these parties, kept every thing in suspense: Foreign affairs were much neglected: And though the duke of York, son to that earl of Cambridge, who was executed in the beginning of the last reign, was appointed successor to the duke of Bedford, it was seven months before his commission passed the seals; and the English remained so long in an enemy's country, without a proper head or governor.

Decline of
the English
in France.

THE new governor on his arrival found the capital already lost. The Parisians had always been more attached to the Burgundian than to the English interest; and after the conclusion of

³⁸ Montrelet, vol. ii. p. 105. Hollingshed, p. 610.

the treaty of Arras, their affections, without any farther controul, universally led them to return to their allegiance under their native sovereign. The constable, together with Lile-Adam, the same person who had before put Paris into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, was introduced in the night-time by intelligence with the citizens: Lord Willoughby, who commanded only a small garrison of 1500 men, was expelled: This nobleman discovered valor and presence of mind on the occasion; but unable to guard so large a place against such multitudes, he retired into the Bastile, and being there invested, he delivered up that fortress, and was contented to stipulate for the safe retreat of his troops into Normandy³⁹.

C H A P.
XX.
1436.

In the same season, the duke of Burgundy openly took part against England, and commenced hostilities by the siege of Calais, the only place which now gave the English any sure hold of France, and still rendered them dangerous. As he was beloved among his own subjects, and had acquired the epithet of *Good*, from his popular qualities, he was able to interest all the inhabitants of the Low Countries in the success of this enterprise; and he invested that place with an army, formidable from its numbers, but without experience, discipline, or military spirit⁴⁰. On the first alarm of this siege, the duke of

³⁹ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 127. Grafton, p. 568.

⁴⁰ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 126. 130. 132. Hollingshed, p. 613. Grafton, p. 571.

C H A P. Gloucester assembled some forces, sent a defiance
XX. to Philip, and challenged him to wait the event
1436. of a battle, which he promised to give, as soon
 as the wind would permit him to reach Calais. The warlike genius of the English had at that time rendered them terrible to all the northern parts of Europe, especially to the Flemings, who were more expert in manufactures, than in arms; and the duke of Burgundy, being already foiled in some attempts before Calais, and observing the discontent and terror of his own army, thought proper to raise the siege, and to retreat before the arrival of the enemy⁴¹.

26th June.

THE English were still masters of many fine provinces in France; but retained possession, more by the extreme weakness of Charles, than by the strength of their own garrisons or the force of their armies. Nothing indeed can be more surprising than the feeble efforts made, during the course of several years, by these two potent nations against each other; while the one struggled for independence, and the other aspired to a total conquest of its rival. The general want of industry, commerce, and police, in that age, had rendered all the European nations, and France and England no less than the others, unfit for bearing the burthens of war, when it was prolonged beyond one season; and the continuance of hostilities had, long ere this time, exhausted the force and patience of both kingdoms. Scarcely

⁴¹ Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 136. Hollingshed, p. 614.

could the appearance of an army be brought into the field on either side; and all the operations consisted in the surprisal of places, in the encounter of detached parties, and in incursions upon the open country; which were performed by small bodies, assembled on a sudden from the neighbouring garrisons. In this method of conducting the war, the French king had much the advantage: The affections of the people were entirely on his side: Intelligence was early brought him of the state and motions of the enemy: The inhabitants were ready to join in any attempts against the garrisons: And thus ground was continually, though slowly, gained upon the English. The duke of York, who was a prince of abilities, struggled against these difficulties during the course of five-years; and being assisted by the valour of lord Talbot, soon after created earl of Shrewsbury, he performed actions, which acquired him honor; but merit not the attention of posterity. It would have been well, had this feeble war, in sparing the blood of the people prevented likewise all other oppressions; and had the fury of men, which reason and justice cannot restrain, thus happily received a check from their impotence and inability. But the French and English, though they exerted such small force, were, however, stretching beyond their resources, which were still smaller; and the troops, destitute of pay, were obliged to subsist by plundering and oppressing the country, both of friends and enemies. The fields in all the north of France,

C H A P. XX. 1440. which was the feat of war, were laid waste and left uncultivated ⁴². The cities were gradually depopulated, not by the blood spilt in battle, but by the more destructive pillage of the garisons ⁴³: And both parties, weary of hostilities, which decided nothing, seemed at last desirous of peace, and they set on foot negociations for that purpose. But the proposals of France and the demands of England, were still so wide of each other, that all hope of accommodation immediately vanished. The English ambassadors demanded restitution of all the provinces which had once been annexed to England, together with the final cession of Calais and its district; and required the possession of these extensive territories without the burthen of any fealty or homage on the part of their prince: The French offered only part of Guienne, part of Normandy, and Calais, loaded with the usual burthens. It appeared in vain to continue the negociation, while there was so little prospect of agreement. The English were still too haughty to stoop from the vast hopes which they had formerly entertained, and to accept of terms more suitable to the present condition of the two kingdoms.

⁴² Grafton, p. 562. ⁴³ Fortescue, who, soon after this period, visited France, in the train of prince Henry, speaks of that kingdom as a desert in comparison of England. See his *Treatise de laudibus Angliæ*. Though we make allowance for the partialities of Fortescue, there must have been some foundation for his account; and these destructive wars are the most likely reason to be assigned for the difference remarked by this author.

THE duke of York soon after resigned his government to the earl of Warwic, a nobleman of reputation, whom death prevented from long enjoying this dignity. The duke, upon the demise of that nobleman, returned to his charge, and during his administration a truce was concluded between the king of England and the duke of Burgundy, which had become necessary for the commercial interests of their subjects⁴⁴. The war with France continued in the same languid and feeble state as before.

O H A P.

XX.

1440.

THE captivity of five princes of the blood, taken prisoners in the battle of Azincour, was a considerable advantage which England long enjoyed over its enemy; but this superiority was now entirely lost. Some of these princes had died; some had been ransomed; and the duke of Orleans, the most powerful among them, was the last that remained in the hands of the English. He offered the sum of 54,000 nobles⁴⁵ for his liberty; and when this proposal was laid before the council of England, as every question was there an object of faction, the party of the duke of Gloucester, and that of the cardinal of Winchester, were divided in their sentiments with regard to it.

⁴⁴ Grafton, p. 573. ⁴⁵ Rymer, vol. x. p. 764. 776. 782. 795, 796. This sum was equal to 36,000 pounds sterling of our present money. A subsidy of a tenth and fifteenth was fixed by Edward III. at 29,000 pounds, which, in the reign of Henry VI. made only 58,000 pounds of our present money. The parliament granted only one subsidy during the course of seven years, from 1437 to 1444.

C H A P.
XX.

The duke reminded the council of the dying advice of the late king, that none of these prisoners should on any account be released, till his son should be of sufficient age to hold, himself, the reins of government. The cardinal insisted on the greatness of the sum offered, which in reality was near equal to two thirds of all the extraordinary supplies, that the parliament, during the course of seven years, granted for the support of the war. And he added, that the release of this prince was more likely to be advantageous than prejudicial to the English interests; by filling the court of France with faction, and giving a head to those numerous malecontents, whom Charles was at present able with great difficulty to restrain. The cardinal's party, as usual, prevailed: The duke of Orleans was released, after a melancholy captivity of twenty-five years⁴⁴: And the duke of Burgundy, as a pledge of his entire reconciliation with the family of Orleans, facilitated to that prince the payment of his ransom. It must be confessed, that the princes and nobility, in those ages, went to war on very disadvantageous terms. If they were taken prisoners, they either remained in captivity during life, or purchased their liberty at the price which the victors were pleased to impose, and which often reduced their families to want and beggary.

1443.

THE sentiments of the cardinal, some time after, prevailed in another point of still greater

⁴⁴ Grafton, p. 578.

moment. That prelate had always encouraged every proposal of accommodation with France; and had represented the utter impossibility, in the present circumstances, of pushing farther the conquests in that kingdom, and the great difficulty of even maintaining those which were already made. He insisted on the extreme reluctance of the parliament to grant supplies; the disorders in which the English affairs in Normandy were involved; the daily progress made by the French king; and the advantage of stopping his hand by a temporary accommodation, which might leave room for time and accidents to operate in favor of the English. The duke of Gloucester, high-spirited and haughty, and educated in the lofty pretensions, which the first successes of his two brothers had rendered familiar to him, could not yet be induced to relinquish all hopes of prevailing over France; much less could he see, with patience, his own opinion thwarted and rejected by the influence of his rival in the English council. But notwithstanding his opposition, the earl of Suffolk, a nobleman who adhered to the cardinal's party, was dispatched to Tours, in order to negotiate with the French ministers. It was found impossible to adjust the terms of a lasting peace; but a truce for twenty-two months was concluded, which left every thing on the present footing between the parties. The numerous disorders, under which the French government laboured, and which time alone could remedy, induced Charles to assent to this truce; and the same motives engaged him

C H A P.

XX.

1443.

28th May.
Truce with
France.

C H A P. afterwards to prolong it ⁴⁷. But Suffolk, not
 XX. content with executing this object of his com-
 1443. mission, proceeded also to finish another business,
 which seems rather to have been implied than
 expressed in the powers that had been granted
 him ⁴⁸.

IN proportion as Henry advanced in years, his character became fully known in the court, and was no longer ambiguous to either faction. Of the most harmless, inoffensive, simple manners; but of the most slender capacity; he was fitted, both by the softness of his temper, and the weakness of his understanding, to be perpetually governed by those who surrounded him; and it was easy to foresee, that his reign would prove a perpetual minority. As he had now reached the twenty-third year of his age, it was natural to think of choosing him a queen; and each party was ambitious of having him receive one from their hand; as it was probable, that this circumstance would decide for ever the victory between them. The duke of Gloucester proposed a daughter of the count of Armagnac; but had not credit to effect his purpose. The cardinal and his friends had cast their eye on Margaret of Anjou, daughter of Regnier, titular king of Sicily, Naples, and Jerusalem, descended from the count of Anjou, brother of Charles V. who had left these magnificent titles, but without any real power or

⁴⁷ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 101. 108. 206. 214.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 53.

possessions, to his posterity. This princess herself was the most accomplished of her age both in body and mind; and seemed to possess those qualities, which would equally qualify her to acquire the ascendant over Henry, and to supply all his defects and weaknesses. Of a masculine, courageous spirit, of an enterprising temper, endowed with solidity as well as vivacity of understanding she had not been able to conceal these great talents even in the privacy of her father's family; and it was reasonable to expect, that, when she should mount the throne, they would break out with still superior lustre. The earl of Suffolk, therefore, in concert with his associates of the English council, made proposals of marriage to Margaret, which were accepted. But this nobleman, besides pre-occupying the princess's favor by being the chief means of her advancement, endeavoured to ingratiate himself with her and her family, by very extraordinary concessions: Though Margaret brought no dowry with her, he ventured of himself, without any direct authority from the council, but probably with the approbation of the cardinal and the ruling members, to engage by a secret article, that the province of Maine, which was at that time in the hands of the English, should be ceded to Charles of Anjou her uncle⁹⁹, who was prime minister and favorite of the French king, and who had already received from his master the grant of that province as his appanage.

C H A P.
XX.
1443.

Marriage of
the king
with Mar-
garet of
Anjou.

⁹⁹ Grafton, p. 590.

C H A P.

XX.

THE treaty of marriage was ratified in England: Suffolk obtained first the title of marquis, then that of duke; and even received the thanks of parliament, for his services in concluding it⁵⁰. The princess fell immediately into close connexions with the cardinal and his party, the dukes of Somerset, Suffolk, and Buckingham⁵¹; who, fortified by her powerful patronage, resolved on the final ruin of the duke of Gloucester.

1447.

THIS generous prince, worsted in all court intrigues, for which his temper was not suited, but possessing, in a high degree, the favor of the public, had already received from his rivals a cruel mortification, which he had hitherto born without violating public peace, but which it was impossible that a person of his spirit and humanity could ever forgive. His dutchess, the daughter of Reginald, lord Cobham, had been accused of the crime of witchcraft, and it was pretended, that there was found in her possession a waxen figure of the king, which she and her associates, Sir Roger Bolingbroke a priest, and one Margery Jordan of Eye, melted in a magical manner before a slow fire, with an intention of making Henry's force and vigor waste away by like insensible degrees. The accusation was well calculated to affect the weak and credulous mind of the king, and to gain belief in an ignorant age; and the dutchess was brought to trial with her confederates. The nature of this crime, so opposite to all

⁵⁰ Cotton, p. 630.⁵¹ Hollingshed, p. 626.

common sense, seems always to exempt the accusers from observing the rules of common sense in their evidence: The prisoners were pronounced guilty; the dutchess was condemned to do public penance, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment; the others were executed⁵². But as these violent proceedings were ascribed solely to the malice of the duke's enemies, the people, contrary to their usual practice in such marvellous trials, acquitted the unhappy sufferers; and increased their esteem and affection towards a prince, who was thus exposed, without protection, to those mortal injuries.

THESE sentiments of the public made the cardinal of Winchester and his party sensible, that it was necessary to destroy a man, whose popularity might become dangerous, and whose resentment they had so much cause to apprehend. In order to effect their purpose, a parliament was summoned to meet, not at London, which was supposed to be too well affected to the duke, but at St. Edmondsbury, where they expected that he would lie entirely at mercy. As soon as he appeared, he was accused of treason, and thrown into prison. He was soon after found dead in his bed⁵³; and though it was pretended that his death was natural, and though his body, which was exposed to public view, bore no marks of outward violence, no one doubted but he had fallen a

C H A P.
XX.
1447.

28th Feb.
Murder of
the duke of
Glocester.

⁵² Stowe, p. 381. Hollingshed, p. 622. Grafton, p. 587.

⁵³ Grafton, p. 597.

C H A P. XX. 1447. victim to the vengeance of his enemies. An artifice, formerly practised in the case of Edward II. Richard II. and Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, could deceive no body. The reason of this assassination of the duke seems not, that the ruling party apprehended his acquittal in parliament on account of his innocence, which, in such times, was seldom much regarded; but that they imagined his public trial and execution would have been more invidious than his private murder, which they pretended to deny. Some gentlemen of his retinue were afterwards tried as accomplices in his treasons, and were condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. They were hanged and cut down; but just as the executioner was proceeding to quarter them, their pardon was produced, and they were recovered to life⁵⁴. The most barbarous kind of mercy that can possibly be imagined!

THIS prince is said to have received a better education than was usual in his age, to have founded one of the first public libraries in England, and to have been a great patron of learned men. Among other advantages, which he reaped from this turn of mind, it tended much to cure him of credulity; of which the following instance is given by Sir Thomas More. There was a man, who pretended, that, though he was born blind, he had recovered his sight by touching the shrine of St. Albans. The duke, happening soon after

⁵⁴ Fabian Chron. anno 1447.

to pass that way, questioned the man, and seeming to doubt of his sight, asked him the colors of several cloaks, worn by persons of his retinue. The man told them very readily. *You are a knave*, cried the prince; *had you been born blind, you could not so soon have learned to distinguish colors*: And immediately ordered him to be set in the stocks as an impostor ⁵⁵.

C H A P.
XX.
1447.

THE cardinal of Winchester died six weeks after his nephew, whose murder was universally ascribed to him as well as to the duke of Suffolk, and which, it is said, gave him more remorse in his last moments, than could naturally be expected from a man hardened, during the course of a long life, in falsehood and in politics. What share the queen had in this guilt is uncertain; her usual activity and spirit made the public conclude with some reason, that the duke's enemies durst not have ventured on such a deed without her privity. But there happened soon after an event, of which she and her favorite, the duke of Suffolk, bore incontestibly the whole odium.

THAT article of the marriage treaty, by which the province of Maine was to be ceded to Charles of Anjou, the queen's uncle, had probably been hitherto kept secret; and during the lifetime of the duke of Gloucester, it might have been dangerous to venture on the execution of it. But as the court of France strenuously insisted on performance, orders were now dispatched, under

⁵⁵ Grafton, p. 597.
VOL. IV.

C H A P. Henry's hand, to Sir Francis Surienne, governor
 XX. of Mans, commanding him to surrender that place to Charles of Anjou. Surienne, either questioning the authenticity of the order, or regarding his government as his sole fortune, refused compliance; and it became necessary for a French army, under the count of Dunois, to lay siege to the city. The governor made as good a defence as his situation could permit; but receiving no relief from Edmund duke of Somerset, who was at that time governor of Normandy, he was at last obliged to capitulate, and to surrender not only Mans, but all the other fortresses of that province, which was thus entirely alienated from the crown of England.

1448. THE bad effects of this measure stopped not here. Surienne, at the head of all his garrisons, amounting to 2500 men, retired into Normandy, in expectation of being taken into pay, and of being quartered in some towns of that province. But Somerset, who had no means of subsisting such a multitude, and who was probably incensed at Surienne's disobedience, refused to admit him; and this adventurer, not daring to commit depredations on the territories either of the king of France or of England, marched into Brittany, seized the town of Fougères, repaired the fortifications of Pontorson and St. James de Beuvron, and subsisted his troops by the ravages which he exercised on that whole province⁵⁶. The duke

⁵⁶ Monstrelet, vol. iii. p. 6.

of Brittany complained of this violence to the king of France, his liege lord: Charles remonstrated with the duke of Somerset: That nobleman replied, that the injury was done without his privity, and that he had no authority over Surienne and his companions⁵⁷. Though this answer ought to have appeared satisfactory to Charles, who had often felt severely the licentious, independent spirit of such mercenary foldiers, he never would admit of the apology. He still insisted, that these plunderers should be recalled, and that reparation should be made to the duke of Brittany for all the damages which he had sustained: And in order to render an accommodation absolutely impracticable, he made the estimation of damages amount to no less a sum than 1,600,000 crowns. He was sensible of the superiority, which the present state of his affairs gave him over England; and he determined to take advantage of it.

C H A P.

XX.

1448.

No sooner was the truce concluded between the two kingdoms, than Charles employed himself, with great industry and judgment, in repairing those numberless ills, to which France, from the continuance of wars both foreign and domestic, had so long been exposed. He restored the course of public justice; he introduced order into the finances; he established discipline in his troops; he repressed faction in his court; he revived the languid state of agriculture and the arts;

State of
France.

⁵⁷ Monstrelet, vol. iii. p. 7. Hollingshed, p. 629.

C H A P.
XX.

1449.

Renewal of
the war with
France.

and in the course of a few years, he rendered his kingdom flourishing within itself, and formidable to its neighbours. Meanwhile, affairs in England had taken a very different turn. The court was divided into parties, which were enraged against each other: The people were discontented with the government: Conquests in France, which were an object more of glory than of interest, were overlooked amidst domestic incidents, which engrossed the attention of all men: The governor of Normandy, ill supplied with money, was obliged to dismiss the greater part of his troops, and to allow the fortifications of the towns and castles to become ruinous: And the nobility and people of that province had, during the late open communication with France, enjoyed frequent opportunities of renewing connexions with their ancient master, and of concerting the means for expelling the English. The occasion therefore seemed favorable to Charles for breaking the truce. Normandy was at once invaded by four powerful armies: one commanded by the king himself; a second by the duke of Brittany; a third by the duke of Alençon; and a fourth by the count of Dunois. The places opened their gates almost as soon as the French appeared before them: Verneuil, Nogent, Chateau Gaillard, Ponteau de mer, Gisors, Mante, Vernon, Argentan, Lisieux, Fecamp, Coutances, Belesme, Pont de l'Arche, fell in an instant into the hands of the enemy. The duke of Somerset, so far from having an army, which could take the field, and relieve

these places, was not able to supply them with the necessary garrisons and provisions. He retired with the few troops, of which he was master, into Rouen; and thought it sufficient, if, till the arrival of succours from England, he could save that capital from the general fate of the province. The king of France, at the head of a formidable army, fifty thousand strong, presented himself before the gates: The dangerous example of revolt had infected the inhabitants; and they called aloud for a capitulation. Somerset, unable to resist at once both the enemies within and from without, retired with his garrison into the palace and castle; which, being places not tenable, he was obliged to surrender: He purchased a retreat to Harfleur by the payment of 56,000 crowns, by engaging to surrender Arques, Tancarville, Caudebec, Honfleur, and other places in the higher Normandy, and by delivering hostages for the performance of articles⁹⁸. The governor of Honfleur refused to obey his orders; upon which the earl of Shrewsbury, who was one of the hostages, was detained prisoner; and the English were thus deprived of the only general capable of recovering them from their present distressed situation. Harfleur made a better defence under Sir Thomas Curson the governor; but was finally obliged to open its gates to Dunois. Succours at last appeared from England under Sir Thomas Kyriel, and landed at Cherbourg: But

C H A P.
XX.

4th Nov.

1450.

⁹⁸ Monstrelet, vol. iii, p. 21. Grafton, p. 643.

C H A P. these came very late , amounted only to 4000
 XX. men , and were soon after put to rout at Four-
 1450. migni by the count of Clermont ⁵⁹. This battle,
 or rather skirmish , was the only action fought by
 the English for the defence of their dominions in
 France , which they had purchased at such an
 expence of blood and treasure. Somerset , shut
 up in Caën without any prospect of relief , found
 it necessary to capitulate : Falaise opened its gates ,
 on condition that the earl of Shrewsbury should
 be restored to liberty : And Cherbourg , the last
 place of Normandy which remained in the hands
 of the English , being delivered up , the conquest
 of that important province was finished in a
 twelvemonth by Charles , to the great joy of the
 inhabitants and of his whole kingdom ⁶⁰.

The English
 expelled
 France.

A LIKE rapid success attended the French arms
 in Guienne ; though the inhabitants of that pro-
 vince were , from long custom , better inclined to
 the English government. Dunois was dispatched
 thither , and met with no resistance in the field ,
 and very little from the towns. Great improve-
 ments had been made , during this age , in the
 structure and management of artillery , and none
 in fortification ; and the art of defence was by
 that means more unequal , than either before or
 since , to the art of attack. After all the small
 places about Bourdeaux were reduced , that city
 agreed to submit , if not relieved by a certain
 time ; and as no one in England thought seriously

⁵⁹ Hollingshed , p. 631.

⁶⁰ Grafton , p. 646.

of these distant concerns, no relief appeared; the place surrendered; and Bayonne being taken soon after, this whole province, which had remained united to England, since the accession of Henry II. was, after a period of three centuries, finally swallowed up in the French monarchy.

THOUGH no peace or truce was concluded between France and England, the war was in a manner at an end. The English, torn in pieces by the civil dissensions which ensued, made but one feeble effort more for the recovery of Guienne: And Charles, occupied at home in regulating the government, and fencing against the intrigues of his factious son, Lewis the Dauphin, scarcely ever attempted to invade them in their island, or to retaliate upon them, by availing himself of their intestine confusions.

C H A P.
XX.
1450.

C H A P. XXI.

H E N R Y V I.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown — The earl of Warwick — Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk — His banishment — and death — Popular insurrection — The parties of York and Lancaster — First armament of the duke of York — First battle of St. Albans — Battle of Blore-heath — of Northampton — A parliament — Battle of Wakefield — Death of the duke of York — Battle of Mortimer's Cross — Second Battle of St. Albans — Edward IV. assumes the crown — Miscellaneous transactions of this reign.

C H A P. **A** WEAK prince, seated on the throne of
XXI. England, had never failed, how gentle soever
1450. and innocent, to be infested with faction, discontent, rebellion, and civil commotions; and as the incapacity of Henry appeared every day in a fuller light, these dangerous consequences began, from past experience, to be universally and justly apprehended. Men also of unquiet spirits, no longer employed in foreign wars, whence they were now excluded by the situation of the neighbouring states, were the more likely to excite intestine disorders, and by their emulation, rivalry, and animosities, to tear the bowels of their native country. But though these causes alone were sufficient to breed confusion, there concurred another circumstance of the most dangerous

nature : A pretender to the crown appeared : C H A P.
 The title itself of the weak prince , who enjoyed XXI.
 the name of sovereignty , was disputed : And the 1450.
 English were now to pay the severe , though late
 penalty , of their turbulence under Richard II.
 and of their levity in violating , without any
 necessity or just reason , the lineal succession of
 their monarchs.

ALL the males of the house of Mortimer were
 extinct ; but Anne , the sister of the last earl of
 Marche , having espoused the earl of Cambridge ,
 beheaded in the reign of Henry V. had transmitted
 her latent , but not yet forgotten claim to her son ,
 Richard , duke of York. This prince , thus de-
 scended by his mother from Philippa , only daughter
 of the duke of Clarence , second son of Edward
 III. stood plainly in the order of succession before
 the king , who derived his descent from the duke
 of Lancaster , third son of that monarch ; and that
 claim could not , in many respects , have fallen
 into more dangerous hands than those of the duke
 of York. Richard was a man of valor and abilities ,
 of a prudent conduct and mild dispositions : He
 had enjoyed an opportunity of displaying these
 virtues in his government of France : And though
 recalled from that command by the intrigues and
 superior interest of the duke of Somerset , he had
 been sent to suppress a rebellion in Ireland ; had
 succeeded much better in that enterprise than his
 rival in the defence of Normandy ; and had even
 been able to attach to his person and family the

Claim of
 the duke of
 York to the
 crown.

C H A P. whole Irish nation, whom he was sent to subdue¹.
 XXI. In the right of his father, he bore the rank of
 1450. first prince of the blood; and by this station, he gave a lustre to his title derived from the family of Mortimer, which, though of great nobility, was equalled by other families in the kingdom, and had been eclipsed by the royal descent of the house of Lancaster. He possessed an immense fortune from the union of so many successions, those of Cambridge and York on the one hand, with those of Mortimer on the other: Which last inheritance had before been augmented by an union of the estates of Clarence and Ulster, with the patrimonial possessions of the family of Marche. The alliances too of Richard, by his marrying the daughter of Ralph Nevil, earl of Westmoreland, had widely extended his interest among the nobility, and had procured him many connexions in that formidable order.

THE family of Nevil was perhaps at this time the most potent, both from their opulent possessions and from the characters of the men, that has ever appeared in England. For besides the earl of Westmoreland, and the lords Latimer, Fauconberg, and Abergavenny; the earls of Salisbury and Warwic were of that family, and were of themselves, on many accounts, the greatest noblemen in the kingdom. The earl of Salisbury, brother-in-law to the duke of York,

¹ Stowe, p. 387.

was the eldest son by a second marriage of the earl of Westmoreland; and inherited by his wife, daughter and heir of Montacute, earl of Salisbury, killed before Orleans, the possessions and title of that great family. His eldest son, Richard, had married Anne, the daughter and heir of Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who died governor of France; and by this alliance he enjoyed the possessions, and had acquired the title, of that other family, one of the most opulent, most ancient, and most illustrious in England. The personal qualities also of these two earls, especially of Warwick, enhanced the splendor of their nobility, and increased their influence over the people. This latter nobleman, commonly known, from the subsequent events, by the appellation of the *King-maker*, had distinguished himself, by his gallantry in the field, by the hospitality of his table, by the magnificence, and still more by the generosity of his expence, and by the spirited and bold manner which attended him in all his actions. The undesigned frankness and openness of his character rendered his conquest over men's affections the more certain and infallible: His presents were regarded as sure testimonies of esteem and friendship; and his professions as the overflowings of his genuine sentiments. No less than 30,000 persons are said to have daily lived at his board in the different manors and castles which he possessed in England: The military men, allured by his munificence and hospitality, as well as by his bravery, were zealously attached to his interests:

C H A P.

XXI.

1450.

The earl of
Warwick.

CHAP. XXI. 1450. The people in general bore him an unlimited affection: His numerous retainers were more devoted to his will, than to the prince or to the laws: And he was the greatest, as well as the last, of those mighty barons, who formerly overawed the crown, and rendered the people incapable of any regular system of civil government.

BUT the duke of York, besides the family of Nevil, had many other partisans among the great nobility. Courtney, earl of Devonshire, descended from a very noble family of that name in France, was attached to his interests: Moubray, duke of Norfolk, had, from his hereditary hatred to the family of Lancaster, embraced the same party: And the discontents, which universally prevailed among the people, rendered every combination of the great the more dangerous to the established government.

THOUGH the people were never willing to grant the supplies necessary for keeping possession of the conquered provinces in France, they repined extremely at the loss of these boasted acquisitions; and fancied, because a sudden irruption could make conquests, that, without steady counsels and a uniform expence, it was possible to maintain them. The voluntary cession of Maine to the queen's uncle, had made them suspect treachery in the loss of Normandy and Guienne. They still considered Margaret as a French woman and a latent enemy of the kingdom. And when they saw her father and all her relations active in promoting the success of the French, they could

not be persuaded, that she, who was all powerful in the English council, would very zealously oppose them in their enterprises.

C H A P.
XXI.
1450.

BUT the most fatal blow, given to the popularity of the crown and to the interests of the house of Lancaster, was by the assassination of the virtuous duke of Gloucester, whose character, had he been alive, would have intimidated the partisans of York, but whose memory, being extremely cherished by the people, served to throw an odium on all his murderers. By this crime, the reigning family suffered a double prejudice: It was deprived of its firmest support; and it was loaded with all the infamy of that imprudent and barbarous assassination.

As the duke of Suffolk was known to have had an active hand in the crime, he partook deeply of the hatred attending it; and the clamors, which necessarily rose against him, as prime minister and declared favorite of the queen, were thereby augmented to a ten-fold pitch, and became absolutely uncontrollable. The great nobility could ill brook to see a subject exalted above them; much more one who was only great grandson to a merchant, and who was of a birth so much inferior to theirs. The people complained of his arbitrary measures; which were, in some degree, a necessary consequence of the irregular power then possessed by the prince, but which the least disaffection easily magnified into tyranny. The great acquisitions, which he daily made, were the object of envy; and as they were

C H A P. gained at the expence of the crown, which was
 XXL. itself reduced to poverty, they appeared on that
 1450. account, to all indifferent persons, the more exceptionable and invidious.

THE revenues of the crown, which had long been disproportioned to its power and dignity, had been extremely dilapidated during the minority of Henry²; both by the rapacity of the courtiers, which the king's uncles could not controul, and by the necessary expences of the French war, which had always been very ill supplied by the grants of parliament. The royal demefnes were dissipated; and at the same time the king was loaded with a debt of 372,000 pounds, a sum so great, that the parliament could never think of discharging it. This unhappy situation forced the ministers upon many arbitrary measures: The household itself could not be supported without stretching to the utmost the right of purveyance, and rendering it a kind of universal robbery upon the people. The public clamor rose high upon this occasion, and no one had the equity to make allowance for the necessity of the king's situation. Suffolk, once become odious, bore the blame of the whole; and every grievance, in every part of the administration, was universally imputed to his tyranny and injustice.

Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk.

THIS nobleman, sensible of the public hatred under which he laboured, and foreseeing an attack from the commons, endeavoured to overawe

² Cotton, p. 609.

his enemies, by boldly presenting himself to the charge, and by insisting upon his own innocence, and even upon his merits and those of his family in the public service. He rose in the house of peers; took notice of the clamors propagated against him; and complained, that, after serving the crown in thirty - four campaigns; after living abroad seventeen years without once returning to his native country; after losing a father and three brothers in the wars with France; after being himself a prisoner, and purchasing his liberty by a great ransom; it should yet be suspected, that he had been debauched from his allegiance by that enemy whom he had ever opposed with such zeal and fortitude, and that he had betrayed his prince, who had rewarded his services by the highest honors and greatest offices, that it was in his power to confer³. This speech did not answer the purpose intended. The commons, rather provoked at his challenge, opened their charge against him, and sent up to the peers an accusation of high treason, divided into several articles. They insisted, that he had persuaded the French king to invade England with an armed force, in order to depose the king, and to place on the throne his own son, John de la Pole, whom he intended to marry to Margaret, the only daughter of the late John, duke of Somerset, and to whom, he imagined, he would by that means acquire a title to the crown: That he had

C H A P.

XXI.

1490.

³ Cotton, p. 641.

C H A P. contributed to the release of the duke of Orleans,
 XXI. in hopes, that that prince would assist king
 1450. Charles in expelling the English from France,
 and recovering full possession of his kingdom:
 That he had afterwards encouraged that monarch
 to make open war on Normandy and Guienne,
 and had promoted his conquests by betraying the
 secrets of England, and obstructing the succours
 intended to be sent to those provinces: And that
 he had, without any powers or commission,
 promised by treaty to cede the province of Maine
 to Charles of Anjou, and had accordingly ceded
 it; which proved in the issue the chief cause of
 the loss of Normandy*.

It is evident, from a review of these articles,
 that the commons adopted without inquiry all
 the popular clamors against the duke of Suffolk,
 and charged him with crimes, of which none
 but the vulgar could seriously believe him guilty.
 Nothing can be more incredible, than that a
 nobleman, so little eminent by his birth and cha-
 racter, could think of acquiring the crown to his
 family, and of deposing Henry by foreign force,
 and, together with him, Margaret, his patron,
 a princess of so much spirit and penetration.
 Suffolk appealed to many noblemen in the house,
 who knew, that he had intended to marry his
 son to one of the co-heirs of the earl of Warwic,
 and was disappointed in his views, only by the

* Cotton, p. 642. Hall, fol. 157. Hollingshed, p. 631.
 Grafton, p. 607.

death of that lady: And he observed, that Margaret of Somerset could bring to her husband no title to the crown; because she herself was not so much as comprehended in the entail, settled by act of parliament. It is easy to account for the loss of Normandy and Guienne, from the situation of affairs in the two kingdoms, without supposing any treachery in the English ministers; and it may safely be affirmed, that greater vigor was requisite to defend these provinces from the arms of Charles VII. than to conquer them at first from his predecessor. It could never be the interest of any English minister to betray and abandon such acquisitions; much less of one, who was so well established in his master's favor, who enjoyed such high honors and ample possessions in his own country, who had nothing to dread but the effects of popular hatred, and who could never think, without the most extreme reluctance, of becoming a fugitive and exile in a foreign land. The only article, which carries any face of probability, is his engagement for the delivery of Maine to the queen's uncle: But Suffolk maintained, with great appearance of truth, that this measure was approved of by several at the council table^s; and it seems hard to ascribe to it, as is done by the commons, the subsequent loss of Normandy and expulsion of the English. Normandy lay open on every side to the invasion of the French: Maine, an inland province, must soon

C H A P.

XXI.

1450.

^s Cotton, p. 643.

H A P. after have fallen without any attack: And as the
XXI. English possessed in other parts more fortresses
1450. than they could garrison or provide for, it
seemed no bad policy to contract their force, and
to render the defence practicable, by reducing it
within a narrower compass.

THE commons were probably sensible, that this charge of treason against Suffolk would not bear a strict scrutiny; and they, therefore, soon after, sent up, against him, a new charge of misdemeanors, which they also divided into several articles. They affirmed, among other imputations, that he had procured exorbitant grants from the crown, had embezzled the public money, had conferred offices on improper persons, had perverted justice by maintaining iniquitous causes, and had procured pardons for notorious offenders⁶. The articles are mostly general; but are not improbable: And as Suffolk seems to have been a bad man and a bad minister, it will not be rash in us to think, that he was guilty, and that many of these articles could have been proved against him. The court was alarmed at the prosecution of a favorite minister, who lay under such a load of popular prejudices; and an expedient was fallen upon to save him from present ruin. The king summoned all the lords, spiritual and temporal, to his apartment: The prisoner was produced before them, and asked what he could say in his own defence; He denied the charge;

⁶ Cotton, p 643.

but submitted to the king's mercy: Henry expressed himself not satisfied with regard to the first impeachment for treason; but in consideration of the second for misdemeanors, he declared, that, by virtue of Suffolk's own submission, not by any judicial authority, he banished him the kingdom during five years. The lords remained silent; but as soon as they returned to their own house, they entered a protest, that this sentence should nowise infringe their privileges, and that, if Suffolk had insisted upon his right, and had not voluntarily submitted to the king's commands, he was entitled to a trial by his peers in parliament.

C H A P.
XXI.
1450.

His banishment.

It was easy to see, that these irregular proceedings were meant to favor Suffolk, and that, as he still possessed the queen's confidence, he would, on the first favorable opportunity, be restored to his country, and be re-instated in his former power and credit. A captain of a vessel was therefore employed by his enemies to intercept him in his passage to France: He was seized near Dover; his head struck off on the side of a long boat; and his body thrown into the sea⁷. No inquiry was made after the actors and accomplices in this atrocious deed of violence.

and death.

THE duke of Somerset succeeded to Suffolk's power in the ministry, and credit with the queen; and as he was the person, under whose government the French provinces had been lost, the

⁷ Hall, fol. 158. Hist. Croyland, contin. p. 525. Stowe, p. 388. Grafton, p. 610.

C H A P. public, who always judge by the event, soon
XXI. made him equally the object of their animosity
1450. and hatred. The duke of York was absent in Ireland during all these transactions; and however it might be suspected, that his partisans had excited and supported the prosecution against Suffolk, no immediate ground of complaint could, on that account, lie against him. But there happened soon after an incident, which roused the jealousy of the court, and discovered to them the extreme danger, to which they were exposed, from the pretensions of that popular prince.

Popular in-
 surrections.

THE humors of the people, set afloat by the parliamentary impeachment, and by the fall of so great a favorite as Suffolk, broke out in various commotions, which were soon suppressed; but there arose one in Kent, which was attended with more dangerous consequences. A man of low condition, one John Cade, a native of Ireland, who had been obliged to fly into France for crimes, observed, on his return to England, the discontents of the people; and he laid on them the foundation of projects, which were at first crowned with surprising success. He took the name of John Mortimer; intending, as is supposed, to pass himself for a son of that Sir John Mortimer, who had been sentenced to death by parliament, and executed, in the beginning of this reign, without any trial or evidence, merely upon an indictment of high treason, given in against him*.

* Stowe, p. 364. Cotton, p. 564. This author admires, that such a piece of injustice should have been committed

On the first mention of that popular name, the common people of Kent, to the number of 20,000, flocked to Cade's standard; and he excited their zeal by publishing complaints against the numerous abuses in government, and demanding a redress of grievances. The court, not yet fully sensible of the danger, sent a small force against the rioters, under the command of Sir Humphrey Stafford, who was defeated and slain in an action near Sevenoke⁹; and Cade, advancing with his followers towards London, encamped on Blackheath. Though elated by his victory, he still maintained the appearance of moderation; and sending to the court a plausible list of grievances¹⁰, he promised, that, when these should be redressed, and when lord Say, the treasurer, and Cromer, sheriff of Kent, should be punished for their malversations, he would immediately lay down his arms. The council, who observed that nobody was willing to fight against men so reasonable in their pretensions, carried the king, for present safety, to Kenilworth; and the city immediately opened its gates to Cade, who maintained,

C H A P.

XXI.

1450.

in peaceable times: He might have added, and by such virtuous princes as Bedford and Gloucester. But it is to be presumed, that Mortimer was guilty; though his condemnation was highly irregular and illegal. The people had at this time a very feeble sense of law and a constitution; and power was very imperfectly restrained by these limits. When the proceedings of a parliament were so irregular, it is easy to imagine, that those of a king would be more so.

⁹ Hall, fol. 159. Hollingshed, p. 634. ¹⁰ Stowe, p. 388, 389. Hollingshed, p. 633.

C H A P. during some time, great order and discipline
 XXI. among his followers. He always led them into
 1450. the fields during the night-time; and published
 severe edicts against plunder and violence of
 every kind: But being obliged, in order to
 gratify their malevolence against Say and Cromer,
 to put these men to death without a legal trial¹¹;
 he found, that, after the commission of this
 crime, he was no longer master of their riotous
 disposition, and that all his orders were neglect-
 ed¹². They broke into a rich house, which they
 plundered; and the citizens, alarmed at this act
 of violence, shut their gates against them, and
 being seconded by a detachment of soldiers, sent
 them by lord Scales, governor of the Tower,
 they repulsed the rebels with great slaughter¹³.
 The Kentishmen were so discouraged by the blow,
 that, upon receiving a general pardon from the
 primate, then chancellor, they retreated towards
 Rochester, and there dispersed. The pardon was
 soon after annulled, as extorted by violence:
 A price was set on Cade's head¹⁴, who was
 killed by one Iden, a gentleman of Suffex; and
 many of his followers were capitally punished for
 their rebellion.

It was imagined by the court, that the duke
 of York had secretly instigated Cade to this
 attempt, in order to try, by that experiment,
 the dispositions of the people towards his title

¹¹ Grafton, p. 612.
 Croyland, contin. p. 526.

¹² Hall, fol. 160.

¹³ Hist.

¹⁴ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 275.

and family ¹⁵: And as the event had, so far, succeeded to his wish, the ruling party had greater reason than ever to apprehend the future consequences of his pretensions. At the same time, they heard that he intended to return from Ireland; and fearing that he meant to bring an armed force along with him, they issued orders, in the king's name, for opposing him, and for debarring him entrance into England ¹⁶. But the duke refuted his enemies by coming attended with no more than his ordinary retinue: The precautions of the ministers served only to show him their jealousy and malignity against him: He was sensible, that his title, by being dangerous to the king, was also become dangerous to himself: He now saw the impossibility of remaining in his present situation, and the necessity of proceeding forward in support of his claim. His partisans, therefore, were instructed to maintain, in all companies, his right by succession, and by the established laws and constitution of the kingdom: These questions became every day, more and more, the subject of conversation: The minds of men were insensibly sharpened against each other by disputes, before they came to more dangerous extremities: And various topics were pleaded in support of the pretensions of each party.

THE partisans of the house of Lancaster maintained, that though the elevation of Henry IV.

The parties
of Lancaster
and York.

¹⁵ Cotton, p. 661. Stowe, p. 391.

¹⁶ Stowe, p. 394.

C H A P. might at first be deemed somewhat irregular,
 XXI. and could not be justified by any of those prin-
 1450. ciples on which that prince chose to rest his
 title, it was yet founded on general consent,
 was a national act, and was derived from the
 voluntary approbation of a free people, who,
 being loosened from their allegiance by the tyranny
 of the preceding government, were moved, by
 gratitude, as well as by a sense of public interest,
 to intrust the sceptre into the hands of their
 deliverer: That, even if that establishment were
 allowed to be at first invalid, it had acquired
 solidity by time; the only principle which ultimate-
 ly gives authority to government, and removes
 those scruples, which the irregular steps, attending
 almost all revolutions, naturally excite in the minds
 of the people: That the right of succession was a
 rule admitted only for general good, and for the
 maintenance of public order; and could never be
 pleaded to the overthrow of national tranquillity,
 and the subversion of regular establishments:
 That the principles of liberty, no less than the
 maxims of internal peace, were injured by these
 pretensions of the house of York; and if so many
 re-iterated acts of the legislature, by which the
 crown was entailed on the present family, were
 now invalidated, the English must be considered,
 not as a free people, who could dispose of their
 own government, but as a troop of slaves, who
 were implicitly transmitted by succession from one
 master to another: That the nation was bound to
 allegiance under the house of Lancaster by moral,

no less than by political duty ; and were they to infringe those numerous oaths of fealty, which they had sworn to Henry and his predecessors, they would thenceforth be thrown loose from all principles, and it would be found difficult ever after to fix and restrain them : That the duke of York himself had frequently done homage to the king as his lawful sovereign, and had thereby, in the most solemn manner, made an indirect renunciation of those claims, with which he now dares to disturb the tranquillity of the public : That, even though the violation of the rights of blood, made on the deposition of Richard, was perhaps rash and imprudent, it was too late to remedy the mischief ; the danger of a disputed succession could no longer be obviated ; the people, accustomed to a government, which, in the hands of the late king, had been so glorious, and in that of his predecessor, so prudent and salutary, would still ascribe a right to it ; by causing multiplied disorders, and by shedding an inundation of blood, the advantage would only be obtained, of exchanging one pretender for another ; and the house of York itself, if established on the throne, would, on the first opportunity, be exposed to those revolutions, which the giddy spirit, excited in the people, gave so much reason to apprehend : And that, though the present king enjoyed not the shining talents, which had appeared in his father and grandfather, he might still have a son, who should be endowed with them ; he is himself

C H A P.

XXI.

1450.

C H A P
XXI.
1450.
eminent for the most harmless and inoffensive manners; and if active princes were dethroned on pretence of tyranny, and indolent ones on the plea of incapacity, there would thenceforth remain in the constitution no established rule of obedience to any sovereign.

THESE strong topics, in favor of the house of Lancaster, were opposed by arguments no less convincing on the side of the house of York. The partisans of this latter family asserted, that the maintenance of order in the succession of princes, far from doing injury to the people, or invalidating their fundamental title to good government, was established only for the purposes of government, and served to prevent those numberless confusions, which must ensue, if no rule were followed but the uncertain and disputed views of present convenience and advantage: That the same maxims, which ensured public peace, were also salutary to national liberty; the privileges of the people could only be maintained by the observance of laws; and if no account were made of the rights of the sovereign, it could less be expected, that any regard would be paid to the property and freedom of the subject: That it was never too late to correct any pernicious precedent; an unjust establishment, the longer it stood, acquired the greater sanction and validity; it could, with more appearance of reason, be pleaded as an authority for a like injustice; and the maintenance of it, instead of favoring public tranquillity, tended to disjoint every principle,

by which human society was supported: That usurpers would be happy, if their present possession of power, or their continuance for a few years, could convert them into legal princes; but nothing would be more miserable than the people, if all restraints on violence and ambition were thus removed, and a full scope given to the attempts of every turbulent innovator: That time indeed might bestow solidity on a government, whose first foundations were the most infirm; but it required both a long course of time to produce this effect, and the total extinction of those claimants, whose title was built on the original principles of the constitution: That the deposition of Richard II. and the advancement of Henry IV. were not deliberate national acts; but the result of the levity and violence of the people, and proceeded from those very defects in human nature, which the establishment of political society, and of an order in succession, was calculated to prevent: That the subsequent entails of the crown were a continuance of the same violence and usurpation; they were not ratified by the legislature, since the consent of the rightful king was still wanting; and the acquiescence, first of the family of Mortimer, then of the family of York, proceeded from present necessity, and implied no renunciation of their pretensions: That the restoration of the true order of succession could not be considered as a change, which familiarized the people to revolutions; but as the correction of a former abuse, which had itself encouraged the

C H A P.

XXI.

1450.

C H A P.
XXI.
1450.

giddy spirit of innovation, rebellion, and disobedience: And that, as the original title of Lancaster stood only, in the person of Henry IV. on present convenience, even this principle, unjustifiable as it was, when not supported by laws, and warranted by the constitution, had now entirely gone over to the other side; nor was there any comparison between a prince utterly unable to sway the sceptre, and blindly governed by corrupt ministers, or by an imperious queen, engaged in foreign and hostile interests; and a prince of mature years, of approved wisdom and experience, a native of England, the lineal heir of the crown, who, by his restoration, would replace every thing on ancient foundations.

So many plausible arguments could be urged on both sides of this interesting question, that the people were extremely divided in their sentiments; and though the noblemen of greatest power and influence seem to have espoused the party of York, the opposite cause had the advantage of being supported by the present laws, and by the immediate possession of royal authority. There were also many great noblemen in the Lancastrian party, who balanced the power of their antagonists, and kept the nation in suspense between them. The earl of Northumberland adhered to the present government: The earl of Westmoreland, in spite of his connexions with the duke of York, and with the family of Nevil, of which he was the head, was brought over to the same party; and the whole north of England, the most warlike

part of the kingdom, was, by means of these two potent noblemen, warmly engaged in the interests of Lancaster. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and his brother Henry, were great supports of that cause; as were also Henry Holland, duke of Exeter, Stafford, duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewsbury, the lords Clifford, Dudley, Scales, Audley, and other noblemen.

C H A P.
XXI.
1450.

WHILE the kingdom was in this situation, it might naturally be expected, that so many turbulent barons, possessed of so much independent authority, would immediately have flown to arms, and have decided the quarrel; after their usual manner, by war and battle, under the standards of the contending princes. But there still were many causes which retarded these desperate extremities, and made a long train of faction, intrigue, and cabal, precede the military operations. By the gradual progress of arts in England, as well as in other parts of Europe, the people were now become of some importance; laws were beginning to be respected by them; and it was requisite, by various pretences, previously to reconcile their minds to the overthrow of such an ancient establishment as that of the house of Lancaster, ere their concurrence could reasonably be expected. The duke of York himself, the new claimant, was of a moderate and cautious character, an enemy to violence, and disposed to trust rather to time and policy, than to sanguinary measures, for the success of his pretensions. The very imbecillity itself of Henry

C H A P. tended to keep the factions in suspense, and make
 XXI. them stand long in awe of each other: It rendered the Lancastrian party unable to strike any violent blow against their enemies; it encouraged the Yorkists to hope, that, after banishing the king's ministers, and getting possession of his person, they might gradually undermine his authority, and be able, without the perilous experiment of a civil war, to change the succession, by parliamentary and legal authority.

1451.
 6th Nov.

THE dispositions, which appeared in a parliament, assembled soon after the arrival of the duke of York from Ireland, favored these expectations of his partisans, and both discovered an unusual boldness in the commons, and were a proof of the general discontents which prevailed against the administration. The lower house, without any previous inquiry or examination, without alleging any other ground of complaint than common fame, ventured to present a petition against the duke of Somerset, the dukes of Suffolk, the bishop of Chester, Sir John Sutton lord Dudley, and several others of inferior rank; and they prayed the king to remove them for ever from his person and councils, and to prohibit them from approaching within twelve miles of the court¹⁷. This was a violent attack, somewhat arbitrary, and supported but by few precedents, against the ministry; yet the king durst not openly oppose it: He replied, that, except the lords, he

¹⁷ Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 263.

would banish all the others from court during a year, unless he should have occasion for their service in suppressing any rebellion. At the same time, he rejected a bill, which had passed both houses, for attainting the late duke of Suffolk, and which, in several of its clauses, discovered a very general prejudice against the measures of the court.

THE duke of York, trusting to these symptoms, raised an army of 10,000 men, with which he marched towards London; demanding a reformation of the government, and the removal of the duke of Somerset from all power and authority¹⁸. He unexpectedly found the gates of the city shut against him; and on his retreating into Kent, he was followed by the king at the head of a superior army; in which several of Richard's friends, particularly Salisbury and Warwick, appeared; probably with a view of mediating between the parties, and of seconding, on occasion, the duke of York's pretensions. A parley ensued; Richard still insisted upon the removal of Somerset, and his submitting to a trial in parliament: The court pretended to comply with his demand; and that nobleman was put in arrest: The duke of York was then persuaded to pay his respects to the king in his tent; and on repeating his charge against the duke of Somerset, he was surprised to see that minister step from behind the curtain, and offer to maintain his innocence. Richard now

C H A P.
XXI.

1452.
The first
armament
of the duke
of York.

¹⁸ Stowe, p. 394.

CHAP. found, that he had been betrayed ; that he was
 XXI. in the hands of his enemies ; and that it was
 become necessary, for his own safety, to lower
 his pretensions. No violence, however, was
 attempted against him : The nation was not in a
 disposition to bear the destruction of so popular a
 prince : He had many friends in Henry's camp :
 And his son, who was not in the power of the
 court, might still be able to revenge his death
 on all his enemies : He was therefore dismissed ;
 and he retired to his seat of Wigmore on the
 borders of Wales ¹⁹.

1453.
 20th July.

WHILE the duke of York lived in this retreat,
 there happened an incident, which, by increasing
 the public discontents, proved favorable to his
 pretensions. Several Gascon lords, affectionate
 to the English government, and disgusted at the
 new dominion of the French, came to London,
 and offered to return to their allegiance under
 Henry ²⁰. The earl of Shrewsbury, with a body
 of 8000 men, was sent over to support them.
 Bourdeaux opened its gates to him : He made
 himself master of Fronzac, Castillon, and some
 other places : Affairs began to wear a favorable
 aspect : But as Charles hastened to resist this
 dangerous invasion, the fortunes of the English
 were soon reversed : Shrewsbury, a venerable
 warrior, above fourscore years of age, fell in
 battle ; his conquests were lost ; Bourdeaux was

¹⁹ Grafton, p. 620.

²⁰ Hollingshed, p. 640.

again

again obliged to submit to the French king²¹, and all hopes of recovering the province of Gascony were for ever extinguished. C H A P. XXI.

THOUGH the English might deem themselves happy to be fairly rid of distant dominions, which were of no use to them, and which they never could defend against the growing power of France, they expressed great discontent on the occasion; and they threw all the blame on the ministry, who had not been able to effect impossibilities. While they were in this disposition, the queen's delivery of a son, who received the name of Edward, was deemed no joyful incident; and as it removed all hopes of the peaceable succession of the duke of York, who was otherwise, in the right of his father, and by the laws enacted since the accession of the house of Lancaster, next heir to the crown, it had rather a tendency to inflame the quarrel between the parties. But the duke was incapable of violent counsels; and even when no visible obstacle lay between him and the throne, he was prevented by his own scruples from mounting it. Henry, always unfit to exercise the government, fell at this time into a distemper, which so far increased his natural imbecillity, that it rendered him incapable of maintaining even the appearance of royalty. The queen and the council, destitute of this support, found themselves unable to resist the York party; and they were obliged to yield to the torrent.

²¹ Polyd. Virg. p. 501. Grafton, p. 623.

C H A P. XXI. 1454. They sent Somerset to the Tower; and appointed Richard lieutenant of the kingdom, with powers to open and hold a session of parliament²². That assembly also, taking into consideration the state of the kingdom, created him protector during pleasure. Men, who thus intrusted sovereign authority to one that had such evident and strong pretensions to the crown, were not surely averse to his taking immediate and full possession of it: Yet the duke, instead of pushing them to make farther concessions, appeared somewhat timid and irresolute even in receiving the power which was tendered to him. He desired, that it might be recorded in parliament, that this authority was conferred on him from their own free motion, without any application on his part: He expressed his hopes, that they would assist him in the exercise of it: He made it a condition of his acceptance, that the other lords, who were appointed to be of his council, should also accept of the trust, and should exercise it: And he required, that all the powers of his office should be specified and defined by act of parliament. This moderation of Richard was certainly very unusual and very amiable; yet was it attended with bad consequences in the present juncture, and by giving time to the animosities of faction to rise and ferment, it proved the source of all those furious wars and commotions which ensued.

THE enemies of the duke of York soon found

²² Rymer, vol. xi. p. 344.

it in their power to make advantage of his excessive caution. Henry being so far recovered from his distemper, as to carry the appearance of exercising the royal power; they moved him to resume his authority, to annul the protectorship of the duke, to release Somerset from the Tower²³, and to commit the administration into the hands of that nobleman. Richard, sensible of the dangers which might attend his former acceptance of the parliamentary commission, should he submit to the annulling of it, levied an army; but still without advancing any pretensions to the crown. He complained only of the king's ministers, and demanded a reformation of the government. A battle was fought at St. Albans, in which the Yorkists were superior, and without suffering any material loss, slew about 5000 of their enemies; among whom were the duke of Somerset, the earl of Northumberland, the earl of Stafford, eldest son of the duke of Buckingham, lord Clifford, and many other persons of distinction²⁴. The king himself fell into the hands of the duke of York, who treated him with great respect and tenderness: He was only obliged (which he regarded as no hardship) to commit the whole authority of the crown into the hands of his rival.

THIS was the first blood spilt in that fatal quarrel, which was not finished in less than a course of thirty years, which was signalized by

H A P.
XXI.

1455.

First battle
of St. Al-
bans.
22th May.

²³ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 361. Hollingshed, p. 642.
Grafton, p. 626.

²⁴ Stowe, p. 309. Hollingshed, p. 643.

CHAP. XXI. twelve pitched battles, which opened a scene of extraordinary fierceness and cruelty, is computed to have cost the lives of eighty princes of the blood, and almost entirely annihilated the ancient nobility of England. The strong attachments, which, at that time, men of the same kindred bore to each other, and the vindictive spirit, which was considered as a point of honor, rendered the great families implacable in their resentments, and every moment widened the breach between the parties. Yet affairs did not immediately proceed to the last extremities: The nation was kept some time in suspense: The vigor and spirit of queen Margaret, supporting her small power, still proved a balance to the great authority of Richard, which was checked by his irresolute temper. A parliament, which was soon after assembled, plainly discovered, by the contrariety of their proceedings, the contrariety of the motives by which they were actuated. They granted the Yorkists a general indemnity; and they restored the protectorship to the duke, who, in accepting it, still persevered in all his former precautions: But at the same time they renewed their oaths of fealty to Henry, and fixed the continuance of the protectorship to the majority of his son, Edward, who was vested with the usual dignities of prince of Wales, duke of Cornwall, and earl of Chester. The only decisive act, passed in this parliament, was a full resumption of all the grants which had been made since the death of Henry V. and which had reduced the crown to great poverty.

9th July.

It was not found difficult to wrest power from hands so little tenacious as those of the duke of York. Margaret, availing herself of that prince's absence, produced her husband before the house of lords; and as his state of health permitted him at that time to act his part with some tolerable decency, he declared his intentions of resuming the government, and of putting an end to Richard's authority. This measure, being unexpected, was not opposed by the contrary party: The house of lords, who were many of them disgusted with the late act of resumption, assented to Henry's proposal: And the king was declared to be reinstated in sovereign authority. Even the duke of York acquiesced in this irregular act of the peers; and no disturbance ensued. But that prince's claim to the crown was too well known, and the steps, which he had taken to promote it, were too evident, ever to allow sincere trust and confidence to have place between the parties. The court retired to Coventry, and invited the duke of York and the earls of Salisbury and Warwick to attend the king's person. When they were on the road, they received intelligence, that designs were formed against their liberties and lives. They immediately separated themselves: Richard withdrew to his castle of Wigmore: Salisbury to Middleham in Yorkshire: And Warwick to his government of Calais, which had been committed to him after the battle of St. Albans, and which, as it gave him the command of the only regular military force maintained

C H A P.

XXI.

1456.

1457.

C H A P. by England, was of the utmost importance in
 XXI. the present juncture. Still, men of peaceable
 dispositions, and among the rest Bouchier, arch-
 bishop of Canterbury, thought it not too late
 to interpose with their good offices, in order to
 prevent that effusion of blood, with which the
 kingdom was threatened; and the awe, in which
 each party stood of the other, rendered the
 mediation for some time successful. It was agreed
 that all the great leaders on both sides should
 meet in London, and be solemnly reconciled.
 1458. The duke of York and his partisans came thither
 with numerous retinues, and took up their
 quarters near each other for mutual security.
 The leaders of the Lancastrian party used the
 same precaution. The mayor, at the head of
 5000 men, kept a strict watch, night and day;
 and was extremely vigilant in maintaining peace
 between them²⁵. Terms were adjusted, which
 removed not the ground of difference. An out-
 ward reconciliation only was procured: And in
 order to notify this accord to the whole people,
 a solemn procession to St. Paul's was appointed,
 where the duke of York led queen Margaret,
 and a leader of one party marched hand in hand
 with a leader of the opposite. The less real
 cordiality prevailed, the more were the exterior
 demonstrations of amity redoubled. But it was

²⁵ Fabian Chron. anno 1458. The author says that some lords brought 900 retainers, some 600, none less than 400. See also Grafton, p. 633.

evident, that a contest for a crown could not thus be peaceably accommodated ; that each party watched only for an opportunity of subverting the other ; and that much blood must yet be spilt, ere the nation could be restored to perfect tranquillity, or enjoy a settled and established government.

EVEN the smallest accident, without any formed design, was sufficient, in the present disposition of men's minds, to dissolve the seeming harmony between the parties ; and had the intentions of the leaders been ever so amicable, they would have found it difficult to restrain the animosity of their followers. One of the king's retinue insulted one of the earl of Warwick's : Their companions on both sides took part in the quarrel : A fierce combat ensued : The earl apprehended his life to be aimed at : He fled to his government of Calais ; and both parties, in every county of England, openly made preparations for deciding the contest by war and arms.

1459.

Battle of
Blore-heath,
23th Sept.

THE earl of Salisbury, marching to join the duke of York, was overtaken, at Blore-heath on the borders of Staffordshire, by lord Audley, who commanded much superior forces ; and a small rivulet with steep banks ran between the armies. Salisbury here supplied his defect in numbers by stratagem ; a refinement, of which there occur few instances in the English civil wars, where a headlong courage, more than military conduct, is commonly to be remarked. He feigned a retreat, and allured Audley to follow

C H A P. him with precipitation: But when the van of the
XXI. royal army had passed the brook, Salisbury
1459. suddenly turned upon them; and partly by the
surprise, partly by the division, of the enemies'
forces, put this body to rout: The example of
flight was followed by the rest of the army:
And Salisbury, obtaining a complete victory,
reached the general rendez-vous of the Yorkists
at Ludlow ²⁶.

THE earl of Warwic brought over to this rendez-vous a choice body of veterans from Calais, on whom, it was thought, the fortune of the war would much depend; but this reinforcement occasioned, in the issue, the immediate ruin of the duke of York's party. When the royal army approached, and a general action was every hour expected, Sir Andrew Trollop, who commanded the veterans, deserted to the king in the night-time; and the Yorkists were so dismayed at this instance of treachery, which made every man suspicious of his fellow, that they separated next day without striking a stroke ²⁷: The duke fled to Ireland: The earl of Warwic, attended by many of the other leaders, escaped to Calais, where his great popularity among all orders of men, particularly among the military, soon drew to him partisans, and rendered his power very formidable. The friends of the house of York in England kept themselves every where in

²⁶ Hollingshed, p. 649. Grafton, p. 936.

²⁷ Hollingshed, p. 650. Grafton, p. 937.

readiness to rise on the first summons from their leaders. C H A P.
XXI.

AFTER meeting with some successes at sea, Warwic landed in Kent, with the earl of Salisbury, and the earl of Marche, eldest son of the duke of York; and being met by the primate, by lord Cobham, and other persons of distinction, he marched, amidst the acclamations of the people, to London. The city immediately opened its gates to him; and his troops increasing on every day's march, he soon found himself in a condition to face the royal army, which hastened from Coventry to attack him. The battle was fought at Northampton; and was soon decided against the royalists by the infidelity of lord Grey of Ruthin, who, commanding Henry's van, deserted to the enemy during the heat of action, and spread a consternation through the troops. The duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewsbury, the lords Beaumont and Egremont, and Sir William Lucie were killed in the action or pursuit: The slaughter fell chiefly on the gentry and nobility; the common people were spared by orders of the earls of Warwic, and Marche²⁸. Henry himself, that empty shadow of a king, was again taken prisoner; and as the innocence and simplicity of his manners, which bore the appearance of sanctity, had procured him the tender regard of the people²⁹, the earl of Warwic and the

Battle of
Northamp-
ton.
10th July,

²⁸ Stowe, p. 409.

²⁹ Hall, fol. 169. Grafton, p. 195.

C H A P. other leaders took care to distinguish themselves
XXI. by their respectful demeanour towards him.

146.

A parlia-
ment.

7th Oct.

A PARLIAMENT was summoned in the king's name, and met at Westminster; where the duke soon after appeared from Ireland. This prince had never hitherto advanced openly any claim to the crown: He had only complained of ill ministers, and demanded a redress of grievances: And even in the present crisis, when the parliament was surrounded by his victorious army, he showed such a regard to law and liberty, as is unusual during the prevalence of a party in any civil dissensions; and was still less to be expected, in those violent and licentious times. He advanced towards the throne; and being met by the archbishop of Canterbury, who asked him, whether he had yet paid his respects to the king? he replied, that he knew of none to whom he owed that title. He then stood near the throne³⁰, and addressing himself to the house of peers, he gave them a deduction of his title by descent, mentioned the cruelties by which the house of Lancaster had paved their way to sovereign power, insisted on the calamities which had attended the government of Henry, exhorted them to return into the right path, by doing justice to the lineal successor, and thus pleaded his cause before them as his natural and legal judges³¹. This cool and moderate manner of

³⁰ Hollingshed, p. 655.
p. 643.

³¹ Cotton, p. 665. Grafton,

demanding a crown, intimidated his friends and encouraged his enemies: The lords remained in suspense³²; and no one ventured to utter a word on the occasion. Richard, who had probably expected, that the peers would have invited him to place himself on the throne, was much disappointed at their silence; but desiring them to reflect on what he had proposed to them, he departed the house. The peers took the matter into consideration, with as much tranquillity as if it had been a common subject of debate: They desired the assistance of some considerable members among the commons in their deliberations: They heard, in several successive days, the reasons alleged for the duke of York: They even ventured to propose objections to his claim, founded on former entails of the crown, and on the oaths of fealty sworn to the house of Lancaster³³: They also observed, that, as Richard had all along borne the arms of York, not those of Clarence, he could not claim as successor to the latter family: And after receiving answers to these objections, derived from the violence and power, by which the house of Lancaster supported their present possession of the crown; they proceeded to give a decision. Their sentence was calculated, as far as possible, to please both parties: They declared the title of the duke of York to be certain and indefeasible; but in

C H A P.

XXI.

1460.

³² Hollingshed, p. 657. Grafton, p. 645.

³³ Cotton, p. 666.

C H A P. XXI. 1460. consideration that Henry had enjoyed the crown, without dispute or controversy, during the course of thirty-eight years, they determined, that he should continue to possess the title and dignity during the remainder of his life; that the administration of the government, meanwhile, should remain with Richard; that he should be acknowledged the true and lawful heir of the monarchy; that every one should swear to maintain his succession, and it should be treason to attempt his life; and that all former settlements of the crown, in this and the two last reigns, should be abrogated and rescinded³⁴. The duke acquiesced in this decision: Henry himself, being a prisoner, could not oppose it: Even if he had enjoyed his liberty, he would not probably have felt any violent reluctance against it: And the act thus passed with the unanimous consent of the whole legislative body. Though the mildness of this compromise is chiefly to be ascribed to the moderation of the duke of York, it is impossible not to observe in those transactions visible marks of a higher regard to law, and of a more fixed authority, enjoyed by parliament, than has appeared in any former period of English history.

It is probable, that the duke, without employing either menaces or violence, could have obtained from the commons a settlement more consistent and uniform: But as many, if not all the members of the upper house, had received

³⁴ Cotton, p. 666. Grafton, p. 647.

grants, concessions, or dignities, during the last
sixty years, when the house of Lancaster was
possessed of the government, they were afraid of
invalidating their own titles by too sudden and
violent an overthrow of that family; and in thus
temporising between the parties, they fixed the
throne on a basis, upon which it could not pos-
sibly stand. The duke, apprehending his chief
danger to arise from the genius and spirit of queen
Margaret, sought a pretence for banishing her the
kingdom: He sent her, in the king's name, a
summons to come immediately to London; in-
tending, in case of her disobedience, to proceed
to extremities against her. But the queen needed
not this menace to excite her activity in defend-
ing the rights of her family. After the defeat at
Northampton, she had fled with her infant son to
Durham, thence to Scotland; but soon returning,
she applied to the northern barons, and employed
every motive to procure their assistance. Her
affability, insinuation, and address, qualities in
which she excelled; her caresses, her promises
wrought a powerful effect on every one who ap-
proached her: The admiration of her great quali-
ties was succeeded by compassion towards her
helpless condition: The nobility of that quarter,
who regarded themselves as the most warlike in
the kingdom, were moved by indignation to find
the southern barons pretend to dispose of the
crown and settle the government: And that they
might allure the people to their standard, they
promised them the spoils of all the provinces on

C H A P.

XXI.

1460.

C H A P. the other side of the Trent. By these means,
 XXI. the queen had collected an army twenty thousand
 1460. strong, with a celerity which was neither expected
 by her friends, nor apprehended by her enemies.

THE duke of York, informed of her appearance in the north, hastened thither with a body of 5000 men, to suppress, as he imagined, the beginnings of an insurrection; when, on his arrival at Wakefield, he found himself so much outnumbered by the enemy. He threw himself into Sandal castle, which was situated in the neighbourhood; and he was advised by the earl of Salisbury, and other prudent counsellors, to remain in that fortress, till his son, the earl of Marche, who was levying forces in the borders of Wales, could advance to his assistance³⁵. But the duke, though deficient in political courage, possessed personal bravery in an eminent degree; and notwithstanding his wisdom and experience, he thought, that he should be for ever disgraced, if, by taking shelter behind walls, he should for a moment resign the victory to a woman. He descended into the plain, and offered battle to the enemy, which was instantly accepted. The great inequality of numbers was sufficient alone to decide the victory; but the queen, by sending a detachment, who fell on the back of the duke's army, rendered her advantage still more certain and undisputed. The duke himself was killed in the action; and as his body was found among

Battle of
 Wakefield.
 24th Dec.

Death of
 the duke of
 York.

³⁵ Stowe, p. 412.

the slain, the head was cut off by Margaret's orders, and fixed on the gates of York, with a paper crown upon it, in derision of his pretended title. His son, the earl of Rutland, a youth of seventeen, was brought to lord Clifford; and that barbarian, in revenge of his father's death, who had perished in the battle of St. Albans, murdered, in cool blood, and with his own hands, this innocent prince, whose exterior figure, as well as other accomplishments, are represented by historians as extremely amiable. The earl of Salisbury was wounded and taken prisoner, and immediately beheaded, with several other persons of distinction, by martial law at Pomfret³⁶. There fell near three thousand Yorkists in this battle: The duke himself was greatly and justly lamented by his own party; a prince who merited a better fate, and whose errors in conduct proceeded entirely from such qualities, as render him the more an object of esteem and affection. He perished in the fiftieth year of his age, and left three sons, Edward, George, and Richard, with three daughters, Anne, Elizabeth, and Margaret.

C H A P.
XXI.

THE queen, after this important victory, divided her army. She sent the smaller division under Jasper Tudor, earl of Pembroke, half brother to the king, against Edward, the new duke of York. She herself marched with the larger division towards London, where the earl

1461.

³⁶ Polyd. Virg. p. 510.

G H A P.

XXI.

1461.

Battle of
Mortimer's
Cross.

of Warwic had been left with the command of the Yorkists. Pembroke was defeated by Edward at Mortimer's Cross in Herefordshire, with the loss of near 4000 men: His army was dispersed; he himself escaped by flight; but his father, Sir Owen Tudor, was taken prisoner, and immediately beheaded by Edward's orders. This barbarous practice, being once begun, was continued by both parties, from a spirit of revenge, which covered itself under the pretence of retaliation³⁷.

Second bat-
tle of St.
Albans.

MARGARET compensated this defeat by a victory which she obtained over the earl of Warwic. That nobleman, on the approach of the Lancastrians, led out his army, re-inforced by a strong body of the Londoners, who were affectionate to his cause; and he gave battle to the queen at St. Albans. While the armies were warmly engaged, Lovelace, who commanded a considerable body of the Yorkists, withdrew from the combat; and this treacherous conduct, of which there are many instances in those civil wars, decided the victory in favor of the queen. About 2300 of the vanquished perished in the battle and pursuit; and the person of the king fell again into the hands of his own party. This weak prince was sure to be almost equally a prisoner whichever faction had the keeping of him; and scarce any more decorum was observed by one than by the other, in their method of treating him. Lord Bonville, to whose care he

³⁷ Hollingshed, p. 660. Grafton, p. 650.

had

had been intrusted by the Yorkists, remained with him after the defeat, on assurances of pardon given him by Henry: But Margaret, regardless of her husband's promise, immediately ordered the head of that nobleman to be struck off by the executioner³⁸. Sir Thomas Kiriell, a brave warrior, who had signalized himself in the French wars, was treated in the same manner.

C H A P.
XXI.
1461.

THE queen made no great advantage of this victory: Young Edward advanced upon her from the other side; and collecting the remains of Warwic's army, was soon in a condition of giving her battle with superior forces. She was sensible of her danger, while she lay between the enemy and the city of London; and she found it necessary to retreat with her army to the north³⁹. Edward entered the capital amidst the acclamations of the citizens, and immediately opened a new scene to his party. This prince, in the bloom of youth, remarkable for the beauty of his person, for his bravery, his activity, his affability, and every popular quality, found himself so much possessed of public favor, that, elated with the spirit natural to his age, he resolved no longer to confine himself within those narrow limits, which his father had prescribed to himself, and which had been found by experience so prejudicial to his cause. He determined to assume the name and dignity of king; to insist openly on his claim; and thenceforth to treat the opposite party as

³⁸ Hollingshed, p. 660.
VOL. IV.

³⁹ Grafton, p. 652.
O

C H A P. traitors and rebels to his lawful authority. But as
 XXI. a national consent, or the appearance of it, still
 1461. seemed, notwithstanding his plausible title, requisite to precede this bold measure, and as the assembling of a parliament might occasion too many delays, and be attended with other inconveniences, he ventured to proceed in a less regular manner, and to put it out of the power of his enemies to throw obstacles in the way of his elevation. His army was ordered to assemble in St. John's Fields; great numbers of people surrounded them; an harangue was pronounced to this mixed multitude, setting forth the title of Edward, and inveighing against the tyranny and usurpation of the rival family; and the people were then asked, whether they would have Henry of Lancaster for king? They unanimously exclaimed against the proposal. It was then demanded, whether they would accept of Edward, eldest son of the late duke of York? They expressed their assent by loud and joyful acclamations⁴⁰. A great number of bishops, lords, magistrates, and other persons of distinction were next assembled at Baynard's castle, who ratified the popular election; and the new king was on
 Edward IV. assumes the crown.
 5th March. the subsequent day proclaimed in London, by the title of Edward IV⁴¹.

IN this manner ended the reign of Henry VI. a monarch, who, while in his cradle, had been proclaimed king both of France and England,

⁴⁰ Stowe, p. 415. Hollingshed, p. 661.

⁴¹ Grafton, p. 653.

and who began his life with the most splendid C H A P
prospects that any prince in Europe had ever XXI.
enjoyed. The revolution was unhappy for his 1461.
people, as it was the source of civil wars; but
was almost entirely indifferent to Henry himself,
who was utterly incapable of exercising his au-
thority, and who, provided he personally met
with good usage, was equally easy, as he was
equally enslaved, in the hands of his enemies and
of his friends. His weakness and his disputed title
were the chief causes of the public calamities:
But whether his queen, and his ministers, were
not also guilty of some great abuses of power, it
is not easy for us at this distance of time to
determine: There remain no proofs on record of
any considerable violation of the laws, except in
the assassination of the duke of Gloucester, which
was a private crime, formed no precedent, and
was but too much of a piece with the usual
ferocity and cruelty of the times.

THE most remarkable law, which passed in this
reign, was that for the due election of members
of parliament in counties. After the fall of the
feudal system, the distinction of tenures was in
some measure lost; and every freeholder, as well
those who held of mesne lords, as the immediate
tenants of the crown, were by degrees admitted
to give their votes at elections. This innovation
(for such it may probably be esteemed) was in-
directly confirmed by a law of Henry IV.⁴²

Miscellaneous
ous transac-
tions of this
reign.

⁴² Statutes at large, 7 Henry VI. cap. 15.

CHAP. which gave right to such a multitude of electors,
 XXI. as was the occasion of great disorder. In the
 1461. eighth and tenth of this king, therefore, laws
 were enacted, limiting the electors to such as pos-
 sessed forty shillings a-year in land, free from all
 burdens within the county⁴³. This sum was
 equivalent to near twenty pounds a year of our
 present money; and it were to be wished, that
 the spirit, as well as letter of this law, had been
 maintained.

THE preamble of the statute is remarkable:
 “Whereas the elections of knights have of late,
 “in many counties of England, been made by
 “outrages and excessive numbers of people,
 “many of them of small substance and value, yet
 “pretending to a right equal to the best knights,
 “and esquires; whereby manslaughters, riots,
 “batteries, and divisions among the gentlemen
 “and other people of the same counties, shall
 “very likely rise and be, unless due remedy be
 “provided in this behalf, &c.”. We may learn
 from these expressions what an important matter
 the election of a member of parliament was now
 become in England: That assembly was beginning
 in this period to assume great authority: The
 commons had it much in their power to enforce
 the execution of the laws; and if they failed of
 success in this particular, it proceeded less from
 any exorbitant power of the crown, than from

⁴³ Statutes at large, 8 Henry VI. cap. 7. 10 Henry VI. cap. 2.

the licentious spirit of the aristocracy, and perhaps from the rude education of the age, and their own ignorance of the advantages resulting from a regular administration of justice.

C H A P.

XXI.

1461.

WHEN the duke of York, the earls of Salisbury and Warwic, fled the kingdom upon the desertion of their troops, a parliament was summoned at Coventry in 1460, by which they were all attainted. This parliament seems to have been very irregularly constituted, and scarcely deserves the name: Inasmuch, that an act passed in it, "that all such knights of any county, as
" were returned by virtue of the king's letters,
" without any other election, should be valid,
" and that no sheriff should, for returning them,
" incur the penalty of the statute of Henry IV.⁴⁴" All the acts of that parliament were afterwards reversed; "because it was unlawfully summoned,
" and the knights and barons not duly chosen⁴⁵."

THE parliaments in this reign, instead of relaxing their vigilance against the usurpations of the court of Rome, endeavoured to enforce the former statutes enacted for that purpose. The commons petitioned, that no foreigner should be capable of any church preferment, and that the patron might be allowed to present anew upon the non-residence of any incumbent⁴⁶. But the king eluded these petitions. Pope Martin wrote him a severe letter against the statute of provisors;

⁴⁴ Cotton, p. 664.
VI. cap. 1.

⁴⁵ Statutes at large, 39 Henry

⁴⁶ Cotton, p. 585.

C H A P. XXI. 1461. which he calls an abominable law, that would infallibly damn every one who observed it ⁴⁷. The cardinal of Winchester was legate; and as he was also a kind of prime minister, and immensely rich from the profits of his clerical dignities, the parliament became jealous lest he should extend the papal power; and they protested, that the cardinal should absent himself in all affairs and councils of the king, whenever the pope or see of Rome was touched upon ⁴⁸.

PERMISSION was given by parliament to export corn when it was at low prices; wheat at six shillings and eight pence a quarter, money of that age; barley at three shillings and four pence ⁴⁹. It appears from these prices, that corn still remained at near half its present value; though other commodities were much cheaper. The inland commerce of corn was also opened in the eighteenth of the king, by allowing any collector of the customs to grant a licence for carrying it from one county to another ⁵⁰. The same year a kind of navigation act was proposed with regard to all places within the Straights; but the king rejected it ⁵¹.

THE first instance of debt contracted upon parliamentary security occurs in this reign ⁵². The

⁴⁷ Burnet's Collection of Records, vol. i. p. 99.

⁴⁸ Cotton, p. 593.

⁴⁹ Statutes at large, 15

Henry VI. cap. 2. 23 Henry VI. cap. 6.

⁵⁰ Cotton, p. 625.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 626.

⁵² Ibid. p. 593. 614. 638.

commencement of this pernicious practice deserves C H A P.
to be noted; a practice, the more likely to become XXI.
pernicious, the more a nation advances in opu- 1461.
lence and credit. The ruinous effects of it are
now become apparent, and threaten the very
existence of the nation.

C H A P. XXII.

E D W A R D I V.

Battle of Tonton — Henry escapes into Scotland — A parliament — Battle of Hexham — Henry taken prisoner, and confined to the Tower — King's marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Gray — Warwick disgusted — Alliance with Burgundy — Insurrection in Yorkshire — Battle of Banbury — Warwick and Clarence banished — Warwick and Clarence return — Edward IV. expelled — Henry VI. restored — Edward IV. returns — Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwick — Battle of Tewkesbury, and murder of prince Edward — Death of Henry VI. — Invasion of France — Peace of Pecquigni — Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence — Death and character of Edward IV.

C H A P.

XXII.

1461.

YOUNG Edward, now in his twentieth year, was of a temper well fitted to make his way through such a scene of war, havoc, and devastation, as must conduct him to the full possession of that crown, which he claimed from hereditary right, but which he had assumed from the tumultuary election alone of his own party. He was bold, active, enterprising; and his hardness of heart and severity of character rendered him impregnable to all those movements of compassion, which might relax his vigor in the prosecution of the most bloody revenges upon his enemies. The very

commencement of his reign gave symptoms of his sanguinary disposition. A tradesman of London, who kept shop at the sign of the Crown, having said, that he would make his son heir to the Crown; this harmless pleasantry was interpreted to be spoken in derision of Edward's assumed title; and he was condemned and executed for the offence¹. Such an act of tyranny was a proper prelude to the events which ensued. The scaffold, as well as the field, incessantly streamed with the noblest blood of England, spilt in the quarrel between the two contending families, whose animosity was now become implacable. The people, divided in their affections, took different symbols of party: The partisans of the house of Lancaster chose the red rose as their mark of distinction; those of York were denominated from the white; and these civil wars were thus known, over Europe, by the name of the quarrel between the two roses.

THE licence, in which queen Margaret had been obliged to indulge her troops, infused great terror and aversion into the city of London and all the southern parts of the kingdom; and as she there expected an obstinate resistance, she had prudently retired northwards among her own partisans. The same licence, joined to the zeal of faction, soon brought great multitudes to her standard; and she was able, in a few days, to assemble an army sixty thousand strong in Yorkshire. The

¹ Habington in Kennet, p. 431. Grafton, p. 791.

H A P. king and the earl of Warwic hastened, with an
 XXII. army of forty thousand men, to check her
 1461. progress; and when they reached Pomfret, they
 dispatched a body of troops, under the command
 of lord Fitzwalter, to secure the passage of
 Ferrybridge over the river Aire, which lay
 between them and the enemy. Fitzwalter took
 possession of the post assigned him; but was not
 able to maintain it against lord Clifford, who
 attacked him with superior numbers. The Yorkists
 were chased back with great slaughter; and lord
 Fitzwalter himself was slain in the action². The
 earl of Warwic, dreading the consequences of
 this disaster, at a time when a decisive action
 was every hour expected, immediately ordered
 his horse to be brought him, which he stabbed
 before the whole army; and kissing the hilt of
 his sword, swore, that he was determined to
 share the fate of the meanest soldier³. And to
 show the greater security, a proclamation was at
 the same time issued, giving to every one full
 liberty to retire; but menacing the severest punish-
 ment to those who should discover any symptoms
 of cowardice in the ensuing battle⁴. Lord Fal-
 conberg was sent to recover the post which had
 been lost: He passed the river some miles above
 Ferrybridge, and falling unexpectedly on lord
 Clifford, revenged the former disaster by the
 defeat of the party and the death of their leader⁵.

² W. Wyrcester, p. 489. Hall, fol. 186. Hollingshed,
 p. 664. ³ Habington, p. 432. ⁴ Hollingshed, p. 664.
⁵ Hist. Croyl. contin. p. 532.

THE hostile armies met at Toton; and a fierce and bloody battle ensued. While the Yorkists were advancing to the charge, there happened a great fall of snow, which, driving full in the faces of their enemies, blinded them; and this advantage was improved by a stratagem of lord Falconberg's. That nobleman ordered some infantry to advance before the line, and, after having sent a volley of flight-arrows, as they were called, amidst the enemy, immediately to retire. The Lancastrians, imagining that they were gotten within reach of the opposite army, discharged all their arrows, which thus fell short of the Yorkists⁶. After the quivers of the enemy were emptied, Edward advanced his line, and did execution with impunity on the dismayed Lancastrians: The bow however was soon laid aside, and the sword decided the combat, which ended in a total victory on the side of the Yorkists. Edward issued orders to give no quarter⁷. The routed army was pursued to Tadcaster with great bloodshed and confusion; and above thirty-six thousand men are computed to have fallen in the battle and pursuit⁸: Among these were the earl of Westmoreland, and his brother, Sir John Nevil, the earl of Northumberland, the lords Dacres and Welles, and Sir Andrew Trollop⁹. The earl of Devonshire,

C H A P.

XXII.

1461.

Battle of
Toton,
29th of
March.⁶ Hall, fol. 186.⁷ Habington, p. 432.⁸ Hollingshed, p. 665. Grafton, p. 656. Hist. Croyl.
cont. p. 533.⁹ Hall. fol. 187. Habington, p. 433.

C H A P. who was now engaged in Henry's party, was
 XXII. brought a prisoner to Edward; and was soon
 1461. after beheaded by martial law at York. His head
 was fixed on a pole erected over a gate of that
 city; and the head of duke Richard and that of
 the earl of Salisbury were taken down, and buried
 with their bodies. Henry and Margaret had re-
 mained at York during the action; but learning
 the defeat of their army, and being sensible,
 that no place in England could now afford them
 shelter, they fled with great precipitation into
 Scotland. They were accompanied by the duke
 of Exeter, who, though he had married Edward's
 sister, had taken part with the Lancastrians, and
 by Henry duke of Somerset, who had commanded
 in the unfortunate battle of Tooton, and who
 was the son of that nobleman killed in the first
 battle of St. Albans.

Henry
 escapes into
 Scotland.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great animosity which
 prevailed between the kingdoms, Scotland had
 never exerted itself with vigor, to take advantage,
 either of the wars which England carried on
 with France, or of the civil commotions which
 arose between the contending families. James I.
 more laudably employed, in civilizing his subjects,
 and taming them to the salutary yoke of law and
 justice, avoided all hostilities with foreign na-
 tions; and though he seemed interested to maintain
 a balance between France and England, he gave
 no farther assistance to the former kingdom in its
 greatest distresses, than permitting, and perhaps
 encouraging, his subjects to assist in the French

service. After the murder of that excellent prince, the minority of his son and successor, James II. and the distractions incident to it, retained the Scots in the same state of neutrality; and the superiority, visibly acquired by France, rendered it then unnecessary for her ally to interpose in her defence. But when the quarrel commenced between the houses of York and Lancaster, and became absolutely incurable but by the total extinction of one party; James, who had now risen to man's estate, was tempted to seize the opportunity, and he endeavoured to recover those places, which the English had formerly conquered from his ancestors. He laid siege to the castle of Roxborough in 1460, and had provided himself with a small train of artillery for that enterprise: But his cannon were so ill framed, that one of them burst as he was firing it, and put an end to his life in the flower of his age. His son and successor, James III. was also a minor on his accession: The usual distractions ensued in the government: The queen-dowager, Anne of Gueldres, aspired to the regency: The family of Douglas opposed her pretensions: And queen Margaret, when she fled into Scotland, found there a people little less divided by faction, than those by whom she had been expelled. Though she pleaded the connexions between the royal family of Scotland and the house of Lancaster, by the young king's grandmother, a daughter of the earl of Somerset; she could engage the Scottish council to go no farther than to express their

C H A P.

XXII.

1461.

C H A P.^e good wishes in her favor: But on her offer to
 XXII. deliver to them immediately the important fortrefs
 1461. of Berwic, and to contract her son in marriage
 with a sister of king James, she found a better
 reception; and the Scots promised the assistance
 of their arms to re - instate her family upon the
 throne ¹⁰. But as the danger from that quarter
 seemed not very urgent to Edward, he did not
 pursue the fugitive king and queen into their
 retreat; but returned to London, where a par-
 liament was summoned for settling the government.

4th Nov.
 A parlia-
 ment.

ON the meeting of this assembly, Edward
 found the good effects of his vigorous measure in
 assuming the crown, as well as of his victory at
 Touton, by which he had secured it: The par-
 liament no longer hesitated between the two
 families, or proposed any of those ambiguous
 decisions, which could only serve to perpetuate
 and inflame the animosities of party. They re-
 cognized the title of Edward, by hereditary
 descent, through the family of Mortimer; and
 declared, that he was king by right, from the
 death of his father, who had also the same lawful
 title; and that he was in possession of the crown
 from the day that he assumed the government,
 tendered to him by the acclamations of the people ¹¹.
 They expressed their abhorrence of the usurpation
 and intrusion of the house of Lancaster, particularly
 that of the earl of Derby, otherwise called Henry
 IV. which, they said, had been attended with

¹⁰ Hall, fol. 137. Habington, p. 434.

¹¹ Cotton, p. 670.

every kind of disorder, the murder of the sovereign and the oppression of the subject. They annulled every grant which had passed in those reigns; they reinstated the king in all the possessions, which had belonged to the crown at the pretended deposition of Richard II. and though they confirmed judicial deeds and the decrees of inferior courts, they reversed all attainders passed in any pretended parliament; particularly the attainder of the earl of Cambridge, the king's grandfather; as well as that of the earls of Salisbury and Gloucester and of lord Lumley, who had been forfeited for adhering to Richard II.¹²

C H A P.

XXII.

1461

MANY of these votes were the result of the usual violence of party: The common sense of mankind, in more peaceable times, repealed them: And the statutes of the house of Lancaster, being the deeds of an established government, and enacted by princes long possessed of authority, have always been held as valid and obligatory. The parliament, however, in subverting such deep foundations, had still the pretence of replacing the government on its ancient and natural basis: But in their subsequent measures, they were more guided by revenge, at least by the views of convenience, than by the maxims of equity and justice. They passed an act of forfeiture and attainder against Henry VI. and queen Margaret, and their infant son, prince Edward: The same act was extended to the dukes of

¹² Cotton, p. 672. Statutes at large, 1 Edw. IV. cap. 1.

C H A P. Somersel and Exeter; to the earls of Northumberland
 XXII. land, Devonshire, Pembroke, Wilts; to the
 1461. viscount Beaumont, the lords Roos, Nevil,
 Clifford, Welles, Dacre, Gray of Rugemont,
 Hungerford; to Alexander Hedio, Nicholas Latimer,
 Edmond Mountfort, John Heron, and
 many other persons of distinction¹³. The parliament
 vested the estates of all these attainted persons
 in the crown; though their sole crime was
 the adhering to a prince, whom every individual
 of the parliament had long recognized, and whom
 that very king himself, who was now seated on
 the throne, had acknowledged and obeyed as his
 lawful sovereign.

THE necessity of supporting the government
 established will more fully justify some other acts
 of violence; though the method of conducting
 them may still appear exceptionable. John earl of
 Oxford and his son, Aubrey de Vere, were
 detected in a correspondence with Margaret,
 were tried by martial law before the constable,
 were condemned and executed¹⁴. Sir William
 Tyrrel, Sir Thomas Tudenham, and John Montgomery
 were convicted in the same arbitrary
 court; were executed, and their estates forfeited.
 This introduction of martial law into civil government
 was a high strain of prerogative; which,
 were it not for the violence of the times, would

¹³ Cotton, p. 670. W. Wyrcester, p. 490.

¹⁴ W. de Wyrcester, p. 492. Hall, fol. 189. Grafton,
 p. 658. Fabian, fol. 215. Fragn. ad finem T. Sproti.

probably

probably have appeared exceptionable to a nation so jealous of their liberties as the English were now become ¹⁵. It was impossible but such a great and sudden revolution must leave the roots of discontent and dissatisfaction in the subject, which would require great art, or in lieu of it, great violence to extirpate them. The latter was more suitable to the genius of the nation in that uncultivated age.

BUT the new establishment still seemed precarious and uncertain; not only from the domestic contents of the people, but from the efforts of foreign powers. Lewis, the eleventh of the name, had succeeded to his father, Charles, in 1460; and was led, from the obvious motives of national interest, to feed the flames of civil discord among such dangerous neighbours, by giving support to the weaker party. But the intriguing and politic genius of this prince was here checked by itself: Having attempted to subdue the independent spirit of his own vassals, he had excited such an opposition at home, as prevented him from making all the advantage, which the opportunity afforded, of the dissensions among the English. He sent however a small body to Henry's assistance under Varenne, Seneschal of Normandy ¹⁶; who landed in Northumberland, and got possession of the castle of Alnewic: But as the indefatigable Margaret went in person to France

¹⁵ See note [A] at the end of the volume.

¹⁶ Monstrelet, vol. iii. p. 95.

C H A P. XXII. where she solicited larger supplies; and promised Lewis to deliver up Calais, if her family should by his means be restored to the throne of England; he was induced to send along with her a body of 2000 men at arms, which enabled her to take the field, and to make an inroad into England. Though reinforced by a numerous train of adventurers from Scotland, and by many partisans of the family of Lancaster; she received a check at Hedgley - more from lord Montacute or Montague, brother to the earl of Warwick, and warden of the east Marches between Scotland and England. Montague was so encouraged with this success, that, while a numerous reinforcement was on their march to join him by orders from Edward, he yet ventured, with his own troops alone, to attack the Lancastrians at Hexham; and he obtained a complete victory over them. The duke of Somerset, the lords Roos, and Hungerford, were taken in the pursuit, and immediately beheaded by martial law at Hexham. Summary justice was in like manner executed at Newcastle on Sir Humphrey Nevil, and several other gentlemen. All those who were spared in the field, suffered on the scaffold; and the utter extermination of their adversaries was now become the plain object of the York party; a conduct, which received but too plausible an apology from the preceding practice of the Lancastrians.

1464.

25th April.

Battle of
Hexham.
15th May.

THE fate of the unfortunate royal family, after this defeat, was singular. Margaret, flying with her son into a forest, where she endeavoured to

conceal herself, was beset, during the darkness of the night, by robbers, who, either ignorant or regardless of her quality, despoiled her of her rings and jewels, and treated her with the utmost indignity. The partition of this rich booty raised a quarrel among them; and while their attention was thus engaged, she took the opportunity of making her escape with her son into the thickest of the forest, where she wandered for some time, over-spent with hunger and fatigue, and sunk with terror and affliction. While in this wretched condition, she saw a robber approach with his naked sword; and finding that she had no means of escape, she suddenly embraced the resolution of trusting entirely for protection to his faith and generosity. She advanced towards him; and presenting to him the young prince, called out to him, *Here, my friend, I commit to your care the safety of your king's son.* The man, whose humanity and generous spirit had been obscured, not entirely lost, by his vicious course of life, was struck with the singularity of the event, was charmed with the confidence reposed in him; and vowed, not only to abstain from all injury against the princess, but to devote himself entirely to her service¹⁷. By his means she dwelt some time concealed in the forest, and was at last conducted to the sea-coast, whence she made her escape into Flanders. She passed thence into her father's court, where she lived several years in privacy and

¹⁷ Monstrelet, vol. iii p. 96.

C H A P.
XXII.
1464.

retirement. Her husband was not so fortunate or so dexterous in finding the means of escape. Some of his friends took him under their protection, and conveyed him into Lancashire; where he remained concealed during a twelve-month; but he was at last detected, delivered up to Edward, and thrown into the Tower¹⁸. The safety of his person was owing less to the generosity of his enemies, than to the contempt which they had entertained of his courage and his understanding.

THE imprisonment of Henry, the expulsion of Margaret, the execution and confiscation of all the most eminent Lancastrians, seemed to give full security to Edward's government; whose title by blood, being now recognized by parliament, and universally submitted to by the people, was no longer in danger of being impeached by any antagonist. In this prosperous situation, the king delivered himself up, without controul, to those pleasures which his youth, his high fortune, and his natural temper invited him to enjoy; and the cares of royalty were less attended to, than the dissipation of amusement, or the allurements of passion. The cruel and unrelenting spirit of Edward, though inured to the ferocity of civil wars, was at the same time extremely devoted to the softer passions, which, without mitigating his severe temper, maintained a great influence over him, and shared his attachment with the

¹⁸ Hall, fol. 191. Fragm. ad finem Sproti.

pursuits of ambition, and the thirst of military glory. During the present interval of peace, he lived in the most familiar and sociable manner with his subjects¹⁹, particularly with the Londoners; and the beauty of his person, as well as the gallantry of his address, which, even unassisted by his royal dignity, would have rendered him acceptable to the fair, facilitated all his applications for their favor. This easy and pleasurable course of life augmented every day his popularity among all ranks of men: He was the peculiar favorite of the young and gay of both sexes. The disposition of the English, little addicted to jealousy, kept them from taking umbrage at these liberties: And his indulgence in amusements, while it gratified his inclination, was thus become, without design, a means of supporting and securing his government. But as it is difficult to confine the ruling passion within strict rules of prudence, the amorous temper of Edward led him into a snare, which proved fatal to his repose, and to the stability of his throne.

C H A P.
 XXII.
 1464.

JAQUELINE OF LUXEMBOURG, dutchess of Bedford, had, after her husband's death, so far sacrificed her ambition to love, that she espoused, in second marriage, Sir Richard Woodeville, a private gentleman, to whom she bore several children; and among the rest, Elizabeth, who was remarkable for the grace and beauty of her person, as well as for other amiable accomplishments.

King's marriage with
 the lady
 Elizabeth
 Gray.

¹⁹ Polyd. Virg. p. 513. Biondi.

C H A P. XXII. 1464. This young lady had married Sir John Gray of Groby, by whom she had children; and her husband being slain in the second battle of St. Albans, fighting on the side of Lancaster, and his estate being for that reason confiscated, his widow retired to live with her father, at his seat of Grafton in Northamptonshire. The king came accidentally to the house after a hunting party, in order to pay a visit to the dutchess of Bedford; and as the occasion seemed favorable for obtaining some grace from this gallant monarch, the young widow flung herself at his feet, and with many tears, entreated him to take pity on her impoverished and distressed children. The sight of so much beauty in affliction strongly affected the amorous Edward; love stole insensibly into his heart under the guise of compassion; and her sorrow, so becoming a virtuous matron, made his esteem and regard quickly correspond to his affection. He raised her from the ground with assurances of favor; he found his passion increase every moment, by the conversation of the amiable object; and he was soon reduced in his turn to the posture and style of a suppliant at the feet of Elizabeth. But the lady, either averse to dishonorable love from a sense of duty, or perceiving that the impression, which she had made, was so deep as to give her hopes of obtaining the highest elevation, obstinately refused to gratify his passion; and all the endearments, caresses, and importunities of the young and amiable Edward, proved fruitless against her rigid

and inflexible virtue. His passion, irritated by opposition, and increased by his veneration for such honorable sentiments, carried him at last beyond all bounds of reason; and he offered to share his throne, as well as his heart, with the woman, whose beauty of person, and dignity of character seemed so well to entitle her to both. The marriage was privately celebrated at Grafton^{2°}: The secret was carefully kept for some time: No one suspected, that so libertine a prince could sacrifice so much to a romantic passion: And there were in particular strong reasons, which at that time rendered this step, to the highest degree, dangerous and imprudent.

C H A P.
XXII.
1464.

THE king, desirous to secure his throne, as well by the prospect of issue, as by foreign alliances, had, a little before, determined to make application to some neighbouring princes; and he had cast his eye on Bona of Savoy, sister to the queen of France, who, he hoped, would by her marriage, ensure him the friendship of that power, which was alone both able and inclined to give support and assistance to his rival. To render the negociation more successful, the earl of Warwic had been dispatched to Paris, where the princess then resided; he had demanded Bona in marriage for the king; his proposals had been accepted; the treaty was fully concluded; and nothing remained but the ratification of the terms agreed on, and the bringing over the princess to

^{2°} Hall, fol. 193. Fabian, fol. 216.

C H A P. XXII. England ²¹. But when the secret of Edward's marriage broke out, the haughty earl, deeming himself affronted, both by being employed in this fruitless negociation, and by being kept a stranger to the king's intentions, who had owed every thing to his friendship, immediately returned to England, inflamed with rage and indignation. The influence of passion over so young a man as Edward, might have served as an excuse for his imprudent conduct, had he deigned to acknowledge his error, or had pleaded his weakness as an apology: But his faulty shame or pride prevented him from so much as mentioning the matter to Warwic; and that nobleman was allowed to depart the court, full of the same ill-humor and discontent, which he brought to it.

Warwic
disgusted.

1466.

EVERY incident now tended to widen the breach between the king and this powerful subject. The queen, who lost not her influence by marriage, was equally solicitous to draw every grace and favor to her own friends and kindred, and to exclude those of the earl, whom she regarded as her mortal enemy. Her father was created earl of Rivers: He was made treasurer in the room of lord Mountjoy ²²: He was invested in the office of constable for life; and his son received the survivorship of that high dignity ²³. The same young nobleman was married to the only daughter of

²¹ Hall, fol. 193. Habington, p. 437. Hollingshed, p. 667. Grafton, p. 665. Polyd. Virg. p. 513.

²² W. Wyrcester, p. 506.

²³ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581

lord Scales, enjoyed the great estate of that family, and had the title of Scales conferred upon him. Catherine, the queen's sister, was married to the young duke of Buckingham, who was a ward of the crown ²⁴: Mary, another of her sisters, espoused William Herbert, created earl of Huntingdon: Anne, a third sister, was given in marriage to the son and heir of Grey, lord Ruthyn, created earl of Kent ²⁵. The daughter and heir of the duke of Exeter, who was also the king's niece, was contracted to Sir Thomas Gray, one of the queen's sons by her former husband; and as lord Montague was treating of a marriage between his son and this lady, the preference given to young Gray was deemed an injury and affront to the whole family of Nevil.

THE earl of Warwic could not suffer with patience the least diminution of that credit, which he had long enjoyed, and which, he thought, he had merited by such important services. Though he had received so many grants from the crown; that the revenue arising from them amounted, besides his patrimonial estate, to 80,000 crowns a-year, according to the computation of Philip de Comines ²⁶; his ambitious spirit was still dissatisfied, so long as he saw others surpass him in authority and influence with the king ²⁷. Edward also, jealous of that power which had supported him, and which he himself had

²⁴ W. Wyrcester, p. 505.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 506.

²⁶ Liv. 3. chap. 4.

²⁷ Polyd. Virg. p. 514.

C H A P. contributed still higher to exalt, was well pleased
 XXII. to raise up rivals in credit to the earl of Warwic;
 1466. and he justified, by this political view, his extreme partiality to the queen's kindred. But the nobility of England, envying the sudden growth of the Woodevilles²⁸, were more inclined to take part with Warwic's discontent, to whose grandeur they were already accustomed, and who had reconciled them to his superiority by his gracious and popular manners. And as Edward obtained from parliament a general resumption of all grants, which he had made since his accession, and which had extremely impoverished the crown²⁹; this act, though it passed with some exceptions, particularly one in favor of the earl of Warwic, gave a general alarm to the nobility, and disgusted many, even zealous, partisans of the family of York.

BUT the most considerable associate, that Warwic acquired to his party, was George, duke of Clarence, the king's second brother. This prince deemed himself no less injured than the other grandees, by the uncontrouled influence of the queen and her relations; and as his fortunes were still left on a precarious footing, while theirs were fully established, this neglect, joined to his unquiet and restless spirit, inclined him to give countenance to all the malecontents³⁰. The favorable opportunity of gaining him was espied

²⁸ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 539.

²⁹ W. Wyrcester, p. 508.

³⁰ Grafton, p. 673.

by the earl of Warwic, who offered him in marriage his elder daughter, and co-heir of his immense fortunes; a settlement which, as it was superior to any that the king himself could confer upon him, immediately attached him to the party of the earl³¹. Thus an extensive and dangerous combination was insensibly formed against Edward and his ministry. Though the immediate object of the malecontents was not to overturn the throne, it was difficult to foresee the extremities, to which they might be carried: And as opposition to government was usually in those ages prosecuted by force of arms, civil convulsions and disorders were likely to be soon the result of these intrigues and confederacies.

C H A P.

XXII.

1466.

WHILE this cloud was gathering at home, Edward carried his views abroad, and endeavoured to secure himself against his factious nobility, by entering into foreign alliances. The dark and dangerous ambition of Louis XI. the more it was known, the greater alarm it excited among his neighbours and vassals; and as it was supported by great abilities, and unrestrained by any principle of faith or humanity, they found no security to themselves but by jealous combination against him. Philip, duke of Burgundy, was now dead: His rich and extensive dominions were devolved to Charles, his only son, whose martial disposition acquired him the surname of *Bold*, and whose

Alliance
with the
duke of
Burgundy.

³¹ W. Wyrcester, p. 511. Hall, fol. 200. Habington, p. 439. Hollingshed, p. 671. Polyd. Virg. p. 515.

C H A P. XXII. ambition, more outrageous than that of Lewis, but seconded by less power and policy, was regarded with a more favorable eye by the other potentates of Europe. The opposition of interests, and still more, a natural antipathy of character, produced a declared animosity between these bad princes; and Edward was thus secure of the sincere attachment of either of them, for whom he should chuse to declare himself. The duke of Burgundy, being descended by his mother, a daughter of Portugal, from John of Gaunt, was naturally inclined to favor the house of Lancaster³²: But this consideration was easily overbalanced by political motives; and Charles, perceiving the interests of that house to be extremely decayed in England, sent over his natural brother, commonly called the bastard of Burgundy, to carry in his name proposals of marriage to Margaret, the king's sister. The alliance of Burgundy was more popular among the English than that of France; the commercial interests of the two nations invited the princes to a close union; their common jealousy of Lewis was a natural cement between them; and Edward, pleased with strengthening himself by so potent a confederate, soon concluded the alliance, and bestowed his sister upon Charles³³. A league, which Edward at the same time concluded with the duke of Brittany, seemed both to increase his security, and to open to him the

1468.

³² Comines, liv. 3. chap. 4. 6.³³ Hall, fol. 169. 197.

prospect of rivalling his predecessors in those foreign conquests, which, however short-lived and unprofitable, had rendered their reigns so popular and illustrious³⁴.

C H A P.
XXII.

BUT whatever ambitious schemes the king might have built on these alliances, they were soon frustrated by intestine commotions, which engrossed all his attention. These disorders probably arose not immediately from the intrigues of the earl of Warwic, but from accident, aided by the turbulent spirit of the age, by the general humor of discontent which that popular nobleman had instilled into the nation, and perhaps by some remains of attachment to the house of Lancaster. The hospital of St. Leonard's near York had received, from an ancient grant of king Athelstane, a right of levying a thrave of corn upon every plough-land in the county; and as these charitable establishments are liable to abuse, the country-people complained, that the revenue of the hospital was no longer expended for the relief of the poor, but was secreted by the managers, and employed to their private purposes. After long repining at the contribution, they refused payment: Ecclesiastical and civil censures were issued against them: Their goods were distrained, and their persons thrown into jail: Till, as their ill-humor daily increased, they rose in arms; fell upon the officers of the hospital, whom they put to the sword; and proceeded in a body, fifteen thousand

1469.

Insurrection
in York-
shire.

³⁴ W. Wyrcester, p. 5. Parliament. Hist. vol. ii. p. 332.

C H A P. strong, to the gates of York. Lord Montague,
XXII. who commanded in those parts, opposed himself
1469. to their progress; and having been so fortunate
 in a skirmish as to seize Robert Hulderne their
 leader, he ordered him immediately to be led to
 execution; according to the practice of the times.
 The rebels, however, still continued in arms;
 and being soon headed by men of greater distinction,
 Sir Henry Nevil, son of lord Latimer, and Sir
 John Coniers, they advanced southwards, and
 began to appear formidable to government.
 Herbert, earl of Pembroke, who had received
 that title on the forfeiture of Jasper Tudor, was
 ordered by Edward to march against them at the
 head of a body of Welshmen; and he was joined
 by five thousand archers under the command of
 Stafford, earl of Devonshire, who had succeeded
 in that title to the family of Courtney, which
 had also been attainted. But a trivial difference
 about quarters having begotten an animosity be-
 tween these two noblemen, the earl of Devon-
 shire retired with his archers, and left Pembroke
 alone to encounter the rebels. The two armies
 approached each other near Banbury; and Pem-
 broke, having prevailed in a skirmish, and having
 taken Sir Henry Nevil prisoner, ordered him im-
 mediately to be put to death, without any form
 of process. This execution enraged, without ter-
 rifying, the rebels: They attacked the Welsh
 army, routed them, put them to the sword with-
 out mercy; and having seized Pembroke, they
 took immediate revenge upon him for the death

Battle of
 Banbury.

26th July.

of their leader. The king, imputing this misfortune to the earl of Devonshire, who had deserted Pembroke, ordered him to be executed in a like summary manner. But these speedy executions, or rather open murders, did not stop there: The northern rebels, sending a party to Grafton, seized the earl of Rivers and his son John; men who had become obnoxious by their near relation to the king and his partiality towards them: And they were immediately executed by orders from Sir John Coniers³⁵.

C H A P.
XXII.
1469.

THERE is no part of English history since the Conquest, so obscure, so uncertain, so little authentic or consistent, as that of the wars between the two Roses, Historians differ about many material circumstances; some events of the utmost consequence, in which they almost all agree, are incredible and contradicted by records³⁶; and it is remarkable, that this profound darkness falls upon us just on the eve of the restoration of letters, and when the art of Printing was already known in Europe. All we can distinguish with certainty through the deep cloud, which covers that period, is a scene of horror and bloodshed, savage manners, arbitrary executions, and treacherous, dishonorable conduct in all parties. There is no possibility, for instance, of accounting for the views and intentions of the earl of Warwick at this time. It is agreed, that he resided, together

³⁵ Fabian, fol. 217.
the volume.

³⁶ See note [B] at the end of

C H A P. with his son-in-law, the duke of Clarence, in
 XXII. his government of Calais, during the commence-
 1469. ment of this rebellion; and that his brother
 Montague acted with vigor against the northern
 rebels. We may thence presume, that the in-
 surrection had not proceeded from the secret coun-
 sels and instigation of Warwic; though the
 murder, committed by the rebels, on the earl of
 Rivers, his capital enemy, forms, on the other
 hand, a violent presumption against him. He and
 Clarence came over to England, offered their
 service to Edward, were received without any
 suspicion, were intrusted by him in the highest
 commands³⁷, and still persevered in their fidelity.
 Soon after, we find the rebels quieted and dis-
 persed by a general pardon granted by Edward
 from the advice of the earl of Warwic: But why
 so courageous a prince, if secure of Warwic's
 fidelity, should have granted a general pardon to
 men, who had been guilty of such violent and
 personal outrages against him, is not intelligible;
 nor why that nobleman, if unfaithful, should
 have endeavoured to appease a rebellion, of which
 he was able to make such advantages. But it
 appears, that, after this insurrection, there was
 an interval of peace, during which the king
 loaded the family of Nevil with honors and favors
 of the highest nature: He made lord Montague
 a Marquis, by the same name: He created his
 son, George, duke of Bedford³⁸: He publicly

³⁷ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 647. 649, 650.

³⁸ Cotton, p. 702.
 declared

declared his intention of marrying that young nobleman to his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, who, as he had yet no sons, was presumptive heir of the crown: Yet we find, that, soon after, being invited to a feast by the archbishop of York, a younger brother of Warwic and Montague, he entertained a sudden suspicion, that they intended to seize his person or to murder him: And he abruptly left the entertainment ³⁹.

C H A P.
XXII.

SOON after, there broke out another rebellion, which is as unaccountable as all the preceding events; chiefly because no sufficient reason is assigned for it, and because, so far as appears, the family of Nevil had no hand in exciting and fomenting it. It arose in Lincolnshire, and was headed by Sir Robert Welles, son to the lord of that name. The army of the rebels amounted to 30,000 men; but lord Welles himself, far from giving countenance to them, fled into a sanctuary, in order to secure his person against the king's anger or suspicions. He was allured from this retreat by a promise of safety; and was soon after, notwithstanding this assurance, beheaded, along with Sir Thomas Dymoc, by orders from Edward ⁴⁰. The king fought a battle with the rebels, defeated them, took Sir Robert Welles and Sir Thomas Launde prisoners, and ordered them immediately to be beheaded.

1470.

13th March.

³⁹ Fragm. Ed. IV. ad fin. Sprotti. ⁴⁰ Hall, fol. 204.
Fabian, fol. 218. Habington, p. 442. Hollingshed, p. 674.

C H A P.

XXII.

1470.

Warwic and
Clarence banished.

EDWARD, during these transactions, had entertained so little jealousy of the earl of Warwic or duke of Clarence, that he sent them with commissions of array to levy forces against the rebels⁴¹. But these malecontents, as soon as they left the court, raised troops in their own name, issued declarations against the government, and complained of grievances, oppressions, and bad ministers. The unexpected defeat of Welles disconcerted all their measures; and they retired northwards into Lancashire, where they expected to be joined by lord Stanley, who had married the earl of Warwic's sister. But as that nobleman refused all concurrence with them, and as lord Montague also remained quiet in Yorkshire; they were obliged to disband their army, and to fly into Devonshire, where they embarked and made sail towards Calais⁴².

THE deputy-governor, whom Warwic had left at Calais, was one Vaucler, a Gascon, who seeing the earl return in this miserable condition, refused him admittance; and would not so much as permit the dutchess of Clarence to land; though, a few days before, she had been delivered on ship-board of a son, and was at that time extremely disordered by sickness. With difficulty, he would allow a few flaggons of wine to be

⁴¹ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 652. ⁴² The king offered by proclamation a reward of 1000 pounds, or 100 pounds a year in land, to any that would seize them. Whence we may learn that land was at that time sold for about ten years purchase. See Rymer, vol. xi. p. 654.

carried to the ship for the use of the ladies : But as he was a man of sagacity, and well acquainted with the revolutions to which England was subject, he secretly apologized to Warwic for this appearance of infidelity, and represented it as proceeding entirely from zeal for his service. He said, that the fortress was ill supplied with provisions; that he could not depend on the attachment of the garrison; that the inhabitants, who lived by the English commerce, would certainly declare for the established government; that the place was at present unable to resist the power of England on the one hand, and that of the duke of Burgundy on the other; and that, by seeming to declare for Edward, he would acquire the confidence of that prince, and still keep it in his power, when it should become safe and prudent, to restore Calais to its ancient master ⁴³. It is uncertain, whether Warwic was satisfied with this apology, or suspected a double infidelity in Vaucles; but he feigned to be entirely convinced by him; and having seized some Flemish vessels, which he found lying off Calais, he immediately made sail towards France.

THE king of France, uneasy at the close conjunction between Edward and the duke of Burgundy, received with the greatest demonstrations of regard the unfortunate Warwic ⁴⁴, with whom he had formerly maintained a secret

⁴³ Comines, liv. 3. cap. 4. Hall, fol. 205.

⁴⁴ Polyd. Virg. p. 519.

C H A P. XXII. 1470. correspondence, and whom he hoped still to make his instrument, in overturning the government of England, and re-establishing the house of Lancaster. No animosity was ever greater than that which had long prevailed between that house and the earl of Warwic. His father had been executed by orders from Margaret: He himself had twice reduced Henry to captivity, had banished the queen, had put to death all their most zealous partisans either in the field or on the scaffold, and had occasioned innumerable ills to that unhappy family. For this reason, believing that such inveterate rancor could never admit of any cordial reconciliation, he had not mentioned Henry's name, when he took arms against Edward; and he rather endeavoured to prevail by means of his own adherents, than revive a party, which he sincerely hated. But his present distresses and the entreaties of Lewis, made him hearken to terms of accommodation; and Margaret being sent for from Angers, where she then resided, an agreement was from common interest soon concluded between them. It was stipulated, that Warwic should espouse the cause of Henry, and endeavour to restore him to liberty and to re-establish him on the throne; that the administration of the government, during the minority of young Edward, Henry's son, should be intrusted conjointly to the earl of Warwic and the duke of Clarence; that prince Edward should marry the lady Anne, second daughter of that nobleman; and that the crown, in case of the failure of male

issue in that prince, should descend to the duke of Clarence, to the entire exclusion of king Edward and his posterity. Never was confederacy, on all sides, less natural or more evidently the work of necessity: But Warwic hoped, that all former passions of the Lancastrians might be lost in present political views; and that at worst, the independent power of his family, and the affections of the people, would suffice to give him security, and enable him to exact the full performance of all the conditions agreed on. The marriage of prince Edward with the lady Anne was immediately celebrated in France.

C H A P.
XXII.
1470.

EDWARD foresaw, that it would be easy to dissolve an alliance, composed of such discordant parts. For this purpose, he sent over a lady of great sagacity and address, who belonged to the train of the dutchess of Clarence, and who, under color of attending her mistress, was empowered to negotiate with the duke, and to renew the connexions of that prince with his own family⁴⁵. She represented to Clarence, that he had unwarily, to his own ruin, become the instrument of Warwic's vengeance, and had thrown himself entirely in the power of his most inveterate enemies; that the mortal injuries, which the one royal family had suffered from the other, were now past all forgiveness, and no imaginary union of interests could ever suffice to obliterate them; that even

⁴⁵ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 207. Hollingshed, p. 675.

C H A P. XXII. 1470. if the leaders were willing to forget past offences, the animosity of their adherents would prevent a sincere coalition of parties, and would, in spite of all temporary and verbal agreements, preserve an eternal opposition of measures between them; and that a prince, who deserted his own kindred, and joined the murderers of his father, left himself single, without friends, without protection, and would not, when misfortunes inevitably fell upon him, be so much as entitled to any pity or regard from the rest of mankind. Clarence was only one - and - twenty years of age, and seems to have possessed but a slender capacity; yet could he easily see the force of these reasons; and upon the promise of forgiveness from his brother, he secretly engaged, on a favorable opportunity, to desert the earl of Warwic, and abandon the Lancastrian party.

DURING this negociation, Warwic was secretly carrying on a correspondence of the same nature with his brother, the marquis of Montague, who was entirely trusted by Edward; and like motives produced a like resolution in that nobleman. The marquis also, that he might render the projected blow the more deadly and incurable, resolved, on his side, to watch a favorable opportunity for committing *his* perfidy, and still to maintain the appearance of being a zealous adherent to the house of York.

AFTER these mutual snares were thus carefully laid, the decision of the quarrel advanced apace. Lewis prepared a fleet to escort the earl of

Warwic, and granted him a supply of men and money ⁴⁶. The duke of Burgundy, on the other hand, enraged at that nobleman for his seizure of the Flemish vessels before Calais, and anxious to support the reigning family in England, with whom his own interests were now connected, fitted out a larger fleet, with which he guarded the Channel; and he incessantly warned his brother-in-law of the imminent perils, to which he was exposed. But Edward, though always brave and often active, had little foresight or penetration. He was not sensible of his danger: He made no suitable preparations against the earl of Warwic ⁴⁷: He even said, that the duke might spare himself the trouble of guarding the seas, and that he wished for nothing more than to see Warwic set foot on English ground ⁴⁸. A vain confidence in his own prowess, joined to the immoderate love of pleasure, had made him incapable of all sound reason and reflection.

THE event soon happened, of which Edward seemed so desirous. A storm dispersed the Flemish navy, and left the sea open to Warwic ⁴⁹. That nobleman seized the opportunity, and setting sail, quickly landed at Dartmouth, with the duke of Clarence, the earls of Oxford and Pembroke, and a small body of troops; while the king was in the north, engaged in suppressing an insurrection,

September.
Warwic and
Clarence re-
turn.

⁴⁶ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 4. Hall, fol. 207.

⁴⁷ Grafton, p. 687.

⁴⁸ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5.

Hall, fol. 208.

⁴⁹ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5.

C H A P. which had been raised by lord Fitz-Hugh, brother-
 XXII. in-law to Warwic. The scene, which ensues,
 1470. resembles more the fiction of a poem or romance
 than an event in true history. The prodigious
 popularity of Warwic⁵⁰, the zeal of the Lan-
 castrian party, the spirit of discontent with which
 many were infected, and the general instability
 of the English nation, occasioned by the late
 frequent revolutions, drew such multitudes to his
 standard, that, in a very few days, his army
 amounted to sixty thousand men, and was con-
 tinually increasing. Edward hastened southwards
 to encounter him; and the two armies approached
 each other near Nottingham, where a decisive
 action was every hour expected. The rapidity
 of Warwic's progress had incapacitated the duke
 of Clarence from executing *his* plan of treachery;
 and the marquis of Montague had here the
 opportunity of striking the first blow. He com-
 municated the design to his adherents, who pro-
 mised him their concurrence: They took to arms
 in the night-time, and hastened with loud accla-
 mations to Edward's quarters: The king was
 alarmed at the noise, and starting from bed, heard
 the cry of war, usually employed by the Lan-
 castrian party. Lord Hastings, his chamberlain,
 informed him of the danger, and urged him to
 make his escape by speedy flight from an army,
 where he had so many concealed enemies, and
 where few seemed zealously attached to his service.

⁵⁰ Hall, fol. 205.

He had just time to get on horseback, and to hurry with a small retinue to Lynne in Norfolk, where he luckily found some ships ready, on board of which he instantly embarked⁵¹. And after this manner, the earl of Warwic, in no longer space than eleven days after his first landing, was left entire master of the kingdom.

C H A P.
XXII.
1470.
Edward IV.
expelled.

BUT Edward's danger did not end with his embarkation. The Easterlings or Hanse-Towns were then at war both with France and England; and some ships of these people, hovering on the English coast, espied the king's vessels, and gave chase to them; nor was it without extreme difficulty that he made his escape into the port of Alcmaer in Holland. He had fled from England with such precipitation, that he had carried nothing of value along with him; and the only reward, which he could bestow on the captain of the vessel that brought him over, was a robe lined with fables; promising him an ample recompence, if fortune should ever become more propitious to him⁵².

It is not likely, that Edward could be very fond of presenting himself in this lamentable plight before the duke of Burgundy; and that having so suddenly, after his mighty vaunts, lost all footing in his own kingdom, he could be insensible to the ridicule which must attend him in the eyes of that prince. The duke, on his part, was no

⁵¹ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 208.

⁵² Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5.

C H A P. XXII.
1470. less embarrassed how he should receive the de-throned monarch. As he had ever borne a greater affection to the house of Lancaster than to that of York, nothing but political views had engaged him to contract an alliance with the latter; and he foresaw, that probably the revolution in England would now turn this alliance against him, and render the reigning family his implacable and jealous enemy. For this reason, when the first rumor of that event reached him, attended with the circumstance of Edward's death, he seemed rather pleased with the catastrophe; and it was no agreeable disappointment to find, that he must either undergo the burthen of supporting an exiled prince, or the dishonor of abandoning so near a relation. He began already to say, that his connexions were with the kingdom of England, not with the king; and it was indifferent to him, whether the name of Edward or that of Henry were employed in the articles of treaty. These sentiments were continually strengthened by the subsequent events. Vaucler, the deputy governor of Calais, though he had been confirmed in his command by Edward, and had even received a pension from the duke of Burgundy on account of his fidelity to the crown, no sooner saw his old master, Warwic, reinstated in authority, than he declared for him, and with great demonstrations of zeal and attachment, put the whole garrison in his livery. And the intelligence, which the duke received every day from England, seemed to promise an entire and full settlement in the family of Lancaster.

IMMEDIATELY after Edward's flight had left the kingdom at Warwic's disposal, that nobleman hastened to London; and taking Henry from his confinement in the Tower, into which he himself had been the chief cause of throwing him, he proclaimed him king with great solemnity. A parliament was summoned, in the name of that prince, to meet at Westminster; and as this assembly could pretend to no liberty, while surrounded by such enraged and insolent victors, governed by such an impetuous spirit as Warwic, their votes were entirely dictated by the ruling faction. The treaty with Margaret was here fully executed: Henry was recognized as lawful king; but his incapacity for government being avowed, the regency was intrusted to Warwic and Clarence till the majority of prince Edward; and in default of that prince's issue, Clarence was declared successor to the crown. The usual business also of reversals went on without opposition: Every statute, made during the reign of Edward, was repealed; that prince was declared to be an usurper; he and his adherents were attainted; and in particular, Richard duke of Gloucester, his younger brother: All the attainders of the Lancastrians, the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the earls of Richmond, Pembroke, Oxford, and Ormond, were reversed; and every one was restored, who had lost either honors or fortune, by his former adherence to the cause of Henry.

THE ruling party were more sparing in their executions, than was usual after any revolution

C H A P.

XXII.

1470.

Henry VI.
restored.

C H A P. during those violent times. The only victim of
 XXII. distinction was John Tibetot, earl of Worcester.
 1470. This accomplished person, born in an age and
 nation where the nobility valued themselves on
 ignorance as their privilege, and left learning to
 monks and schoolmasters, for whom indeed the
 spurious erudition, that prevailed, was best fitted,
 had been struck with the first rays of true science,
 which began to penetrate from the south, and
 had been zealous, by his exhortation and example,
 to propagate the love of letters among his un-
 polished countrymen. It is pretended, that know-
 ledge had not produced, on this nobleman him-
 self, the effect which so naturally attends it, of
 humanizing the temper, and softening the heart⁵³;
 and that he had enraged the Lancastrians against
 him, by the severities which he exercised upon
 them, during the prevalence of his own party.
 He endeavoured to conceal himself after the flight
 of Edward; but was caught on the top of a tree
 in the forest of Weybridge, was conducted to
 London, tried before the earl of Oxford, con-
 demned and executed. All the other considerable
 Yorkists either fled beyond sea, or took shelter
 in sanctuaries; where the ecclesiastical privileges
 afforded them protection. In London alone, it is
 computed, that no less than 2000 persons saved
 themselves in this manner⁵⁴; and among the rest,

⁵³ Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 422.
 liv. 3. chap. 7.

⁵⁴ Comines,

Edward's queen, who was there delivered of a son, called by his father's name ⁵⁵.

C H A P.
XXII.

1479.

QUEEN Margaret, the other rival queen, had not yet appeared in England, but on receiving intelligence of Warwick's success, was preparing with prince Edward for her journey. All the banished Lancastrians flocked to her; and among the rest, the duke of Somerset, son of the duke beheaded after the battle of Hexham. This nobleman, who had long been regarded as the head of the party, had fled into the Low Countries on the discomfiture of his friends; and as he concealed his name and quality, he had there languished in extreme indigence. Philip de Comines tells us ⁵⁶, that he himself saw him, as well as the duke of Exeter, in a condition no better than that of a common beggar; till being discovered by Philip duke of Burgundy, they had small pensions allotted them, and were living in silence and obscurity, when the success of their party called them from their retreat. But both Somerset and Margaret were detained by contrary winds from reaching England ⁵⁷, till a new revolution in that kingdom, no less sudden and surprising than the former, threw them into greater misery than that from which they had just emerged.

THOUGH the duke of Burgundy, by neglecting Edward, and paying court to the established

⁵⁵ Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 423. Hollingshed, p. 677. Grafton, p. 690. ⁵⁶ Liv. 3. chap. 4. ⁵⁷ Grafton, p. 692. Polyd. i Vrg. p. 522.

C H A P. government, had endeavoured to conciliate the
XXII. friendship of the Lancastrians, he found that he
had not succeeded to his wish; and the connexions
between the king of France and the earl of
Warwic, still held him in great anxiety⁵⁸. This
nobleman, too hastily regarding Charles as a
determined enemy, had sent over to Calais a
body of 4000 men, who made inroads into the
Low Countries⁵⁹; and the duke of Burgundy
saw himself in danger of being overwhelmed by
the united arms of England and of France. He
resolved therefore to grant some assistance to his
brother-in-law; but in such a covert manner,
as should give the least offence possible to the
English government. He equipped four large
vessels, in the name of some private merchants,
at Terveer in Zealand; and causing fourteen
ships to be secretly hired from the Easterlings,
he delivered this small squadron to Edward,
who, receiving also a sum of money from the
duke, immediately set sail for England. No
sooner was Charles informed of his departure,
than he issued a proclamation inhibiting all his
subjects from giving him countenance or assist-
ance⁶⁰; an artifice which could not deceive the
earl of Warwic, but which might serve as a
decent pretence, if that nobleman were so dis-
posed, for maintaining friendship with the duke
of Burgundy.

⁵⁸ Hall, fol. 205.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 6.

EDWARD, impatient to take revenge on his enemies, and to recover his lost authority, made an attempt to land with his forces, which exceeded not 2000 men, on the coast of Norfolk; but being there repulsed, he sailed northwards, and disembarked at Ravenspur in Yorkshire. Finding, that the new magistrates, who had been appointed by the earl of Warwic, kept the people every where from joining him, he pretended, and even made oath, that he came not to challenge the crown, but only the inheritance of the house of York, which of right belonged to him, and that he did not intend to disturb the peace of the kingdom. His partisans every moment flocked to his standard: He was admitted into the city of York: And he was soon in such a situation, as gave him hopes of succeeding in all his claims and pretensions. The marquis of Montague commanded in the northern counties; but from some mysterious reasons, which, as well as many other important transactions in that age, no historian has cleared up, he totally neglected the beginnings of an insurrection, which he ought to have esteemed so formidable. Warwic assembled an army at Leicester, with an intention of meeting and of giving battle to the enemy; but Edward, by taking another road, passed him unmolested, and presented himself before the gates of London. Had he here been refused admittance, he was totally undone: But there were many reasons, which inclined the citizens to favor him. His numerous friends,

C H A P.

XXII.

1471.

24th March.

Edward IV.

returns.

C H A P. XXII. 1471. issuing from their sanctuaries, were active in his cause; many rich merchants, who had formerly lent him money, saw no other chance for their payment but his restoration; the city-dames, who had been liberal of their favors to him, and who still retained an affection for this young and gallant prince, swayed their husbands and friends in his favor⁶¹; and above all, the archbishop of York, Warwic's brother, to whom the care of the city was committed, had secretly, from unknown reasons, entered into a correspondence with him; and he facilitated Edward's admission into London. The most likely cause, which can be assigned for those multiplied infidelities, even in the family of Nevil itself, is the spirit of faction, which, when it becomes inveterate, it is very difficult for any man entirely to shake off. These persons, who had long distinguished themselves in the York party, were unable to act with zeal and cordiality for the support of the Lancastrians; and they were inclined, by any prospect of favor or accommodation offered them by Edward, to return to their ancient connexions. However this may be, Edward's entrance into London, made him master not only of that rich and powerful city, but also of the person of Henry, who, destined to be the perpetual sport of fortune, thus fell again into the hands of his enemies⁶².

⁶¹ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

⁶² Grafton, p. 702.

C H A P.

XXII.

1471.

It appears not, that Warwic, during his short administration, which had continued only six months, had been guilty of any unpopular act, or had any wife deserved to lose that general favor, with which he had so lately overwhelmed Edward. But this prince, who was formerly on the defensive, was now the aggressor; and having overcome the difficulties, which always attend the beginnings of an insurrection, possessed many advantages above his enemy: His partisans were actuated by that zeal and courage, which the notion of an attack inspires; his opponents were intimidated for a like reason; every one, who had been disappointed in the hopes, which he had entertained from Warwic's elevation, either became a cool friend, or an open enemy to that nobleman; and each malecontent, from whatever cause, proved an accession to Edward's army. The king, therefore, found himself in a condition to face the earl of Warwic; who, being re-inforced by his son-in-law, the duke of Clarence, and his brother the marquis of Montague, took post at Barnet, in the neighbourhood of London. The arrival of queen Margaret was every day expected, who would have drawn together all the genuine Lancastrians, and have brought a great accession to Warwic's forces: But this very consideration proved a motive to the earl rather to hurry on a decisive action, than to share the victory with rivals and ancient enemies, who, he foresaw, would, in case of success,

C H A P. claim the chief merit in the enterprize ⁶³. But
 XXII. while his jealousy was all directed towards that
 1471. side, he overlooked the dangerous infidelity of
 friends, who lay the nearest to his bosom. His
 brother, Montague, who had lately temporised,
 seems now to have remained sincerely attached
 to the interests of his family: But his son-in-law,
 though bound to him by every tie of honor and
 gratitude, though he shared the power of the
 regency, though he had been invested by Warwic
 in all the honors and patrimony of the house of
 York, resolved to fulfil the secret engagements,
 which he had formerly taken with his brother,
 and to support the interests of his own family:
 He deserted to the king in the night-time, and
 carried over a body of 12,000 men along with
 him ⁶⁴. Warwic was now too far advanced to
 retreat; and as he rejected with disdain all terms
 of peace offered him by Edward and Clarence,
 he was obliged to hazard a general engagement.
 14th April. The battle was fought with obstinacy on both
 Battle of sides: The two armies, in imitation of their
 Barnet, and leaders, displayed uncommon valor: And the
 death of victory remained long undecided between them.
 Warwic. But an accident threw the balance to the side of
 the Yorkists. Edward's cognisance was a sun;
 that of Warwic a star with rays; and the mistiness
 of the morning rendering it difficult to distinguish
 them, the earl of Oxford, who fought on the

⁶³ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7. ⁶⁴ Grafton, p. 700.
 Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7. Leland's collect. vol. ii. p. 505.

side of the Lancastrians, was, by mistake, attacked by his friends, and chased off the field of battle⁶⁵. Warwic, contrary to his more usual practice, engaged that day on foot, resolving to show his army, that he meant to share every fortune with them; and he was slain in the thickest of the engagement⁶⁶: His brother underwent the same fate: And as Edward had issued orders not to give any quarter, a great and undistinguished slaughter was made in the pursuit⁶⁷. There fell about 1500 on the side of the victors.

THE same day, on which this decisive battle was fought⁶⁸, queen Margaret and her son, now about eighteen years of age, and a young prince of great hopes, landed at Weymouth, supported by a small body of French forces. When this princess received intelligence of her husband's captivity, and of the defeat and death of the earl of Warwic, her courage, which had supported her under so many disastrous events, here quite left her; and she immediately foresaw all the dismal consequences of this calamity. At first, she took sanctuary in the abbey of Beaulieu⁶⁹; but being encouraged by the appearance of Tudor, earl of Pembroke, and Courtney, earl of Devonshire, of the lords Wenloc and St. John, with other men of rank, who exhorted her still to hope

⁶⁵ Habington, p. 449.

⁶⁶ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

⁶⁷ Hall, fol. 218.

⁶⁸ Leland's Collect. vol ii. p. 505.

⁶⁹ Hall, fol. 219. Habington, p. 451. Grafton, p. 706. Polyd. Virg. p. 528.

H A P. for success, she resumed her former spirit, and
 XXII. determined to defend to the utmost the ruins of
 1471. her fallen fortunes. She advanced through the
 counties of Devon, Somerset, and Gloucester,
 increasing her army on each day's march; but
 was at last overtaken by the rapid and expeditious
 Edward, at Tewkesbury, on the banks of the
 Severne. The Lancastrians were here totally
 defeated: The earl of Devonshire and lord Wen-
 loc were killed in the field: The duke of
 Somerset, and about twenty other persons of
 distinction, having taken shelter in a church,
 were surrounded, dragged out, and immediately
 beheaded: About 3000 of their side fell in battle:
 And the army was entirely dispersed.

Battle of
 Tewkesbury.
 4th May.

QUEEN Margaret and her son were taken pri-
 soners, and brought to the king, who asked the
 prince, after an insulting manner, how he dared
 to invade his dominions? The young prince,
 more mindful of his high birth than of his present
 fortune, replied, that he came thither to claim
 his just inheritance. The ungenerous Edward,
 insensible to pity, struck him on the face with his
 gauntlet; and the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester,
 lord Hastings and Sir Thomas Gray, taking the
 blow as a signal for farther violence, hurried the
 prince into the next apartment, and there dis-
 patched him with their daggers⁷⁰. Margaret was
 thrown into the Tower: King Henry expired in

Murder of
 prince Ed-
 ward.
 21th May.

⁷⁰ Hall, fol. 221. Habington, p. 453. Hollingshed,
 p. 688. Polyd. Virg. p. 530.

that confinement a few days after the battle of Tewkesbury; but whether he died a natural or violent death is uncertain. It is pretended, and was generally believed, that the duke of Gloucester killed him with his own hands⁷¹: But the universal odium, which that prince has incurred, inclined perhaps the nation to aggravate his crimes without any sufficient authority. It is certain, however, that Henry's death was sudden; and though he laboured under an ill state of health, this circumstance, joined to the general manners of the age, gave a natural ground of suspicion; which was rather increased than diminished, by the exposing of his body to public view. That precaution served only to recal many similar instances in the English history, and to suggest the comparifon.

ALL the hopes of the house of Lancaster seemed now to be utterly extinguished. Every legitimate prince of that family was dead: Almost every great leader of the party had perished in battle or on the scaffold: The earl of Pembroke, who was levying forces in Wales, disbanded his army, when he received intelligence of the battle of Tewkesbury; and he fled into Britanny with his nephew, the young earl of Richmond⁷². The bastard of Falconberg, who had levied some forces, and had advanced to London during Edward's absence, was repulsed; his men deserted

C H A P.

XXII.

14 7.

Death of
Henry VI.

6th Oct.

⁷¹ Comines. Hall, fol. 223. Grafton, p. 703.

⁷² Habington, p. 454. Polyd. Virg. p. 531.

C H A P. him; he was taken prisoner and immediately
 XXII. executed⁷³: And peace being now fully restored
 to the nation, a parliament was summoned,
 which ratified, as usual, all the acts of the victor,
 and recognised his legal authority.

1472.

BUT this prince, who had been so firm, and
 active, and intrepid during the course of adver-
 sity, was still unable to resist the allurements of
 a prosperous fortune; and he wholly devoted
 himself, as before, to pleasure and amusement,
 after he became entirely master of his kingdom,
 and had no longer any enemy who could give
 him anxiety or alarm. He recovered, however,
 by this gay and inoffensive course of life, and
 by his easy, familiar manners, that popularity,
 which, it is natural to imagine, he had lost by
 the repeated cruelties exercised upon his enemies;
 and the example also of his jovial festivity served
 to abate the former acrimony of faction among
 his subjects, and to restore the social disposition,
 which had been so long interrupted between the
 opposite parties. All men seemed to be fully
 satisfied with the present government; and the
 memory of past calamities served only to impress
 the people more strongly with a sense of their
 allegiance, and with the resolution of never in-
 curring any more the hazard of renewing such
 direful scenes.

1474.

BUT while the king was thus indulging himself
 in pleasure, he was roused from his lethargy by

⁷³ Hollingshed, p. 689, 690. 693. Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 554

a prospect of foreign conquests, which, it is probable, his desire of popularity, more than the spirit of ambition, had made him covet. Though he deemed himself little beholden to the duke of Burgundy, for the reception which that prince had given him during his exile⁷⁴, the political interests of their states maintained still a close connexion between them; and they agreed to unite their arms in making a powerful invasion on France. A league was formed, in which Edward stipulated to pass the seas with an army, exceeding 10,000 men, and to invade the French territories: Charles promised to join him with all his forces: The king was to challenge the crown of France, and to obtain at least the provinces of Normandy and Guienne: The duke was to acquire Champagne and some other territories, and to free all his dominions from the burthen of homage to the crown of France: And neither party was to make peace without the consent of the other⁷⁵. They were the more encouraged to hope for success from this league, as the count of St. Pol, constable of France, who was master of St. Quentin, and other towns on the Somme, had secretly promised to join them; and there were also hopes of engaging the duke of Brittany to enter into the confederacy.

THE prospect of a French war was always a sure means of making the parliament open their

⁷⁴ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.
p. 806, 807, 808, &c.

⁷⁵ Rymer, vol. xi.

CHAP. XXII. purses, as far as the habits of that age would permit. They voted the king a tenth of rents, or two shillings in the pound; which must have been very inaccurately levied, since it produced only 31,460 pounds; and they added to this supply a whole fifteenth, and three quarters of another⁷⁶: But as the king deemed these sums still unequal to the undertaking, he attempted to levy money by way of *benevolence*; a kind of exaction, which, except during the reigns of Henry III. and Richard II. had not much been practised in former times, and which, though the consent of the parties was pretended to be gained, could not be deemed entirely voluntary⁷⁷. The clauses, annexed to the parliamentary grant, show sufficiently the spirit of the nation in this respect. The money levied by the fifteenth was not to be put into the king's hands, but to be kept in religious houses; and if the expedition into France should not take place, it was immediately to be refunded to the people. After these grants, the parliament was dissolved, which had sitten near two years and a half, and had undergone several prorogations; a practice not very usual at that time in England.

1475.

Invasion of
France.

THE king passed over to Calais with an army of 1500 men at arms, and 15,000 archers; attended by all the chief nobility of England, who,

⁷⁶ Cotton, p. 696. 700. Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 558.

⁷⁷ Hall, fol. 226. Habington, p. 461. Grafton, p. 719. Fabian, fol. 221.

prognosticating future successes from the past, C H A P.
XXII.
1475.
 were eager to appear on this great theatre of honor⁷⁸. But all their sanguine hopes were damped, when they found, on entering the French territories, that neither did the constable open his gates to them, nor the duke of Burgundy bring them the smallest assistance. That prince, transported by his ardent temper, had carried all his armies to a great distance, and had employed them in wars on the frontiers of Germany, and against the duke of Lorrain: And though he came in person to Edward, and endeavoured to apologize for this breach of treaty, there was no prospect that they would be able this campaign to make a conjunction with the English. This circumstance gave great disgust to the king, and inclined him to hearken to those advances, which Lewis continually made him for an accommodation.

THAT monarch, more swayed by political views than by the point of honor, deemed no submissions too mean, which might free him from enemies, who had proved so formidable to his predecessors, and who, united to so many other enemies, might still shake the well-established government of France. It appears from Comines, that discipline was, at this time, very imperfect among the English; and that their civil wars,

⁷⁸ Comines, liv. 4. chap. 5. This author says, (chap. 11.) that the king artfully brought over some of the richest of his subjects, who, he knew, would be soon tired of the war, and would promote all proposals of peace, which, he foresaw, would be soon necessary.

C H A P. though long continued, yet, being always decided
 XXII. by hasty battles, had still left them ignorant of
 1475. the improvements, which the military art was
 beginning to receive upon the continent ⁷⁹. But
 as Lewis was sensible, that the warlike genius of
 the people would soon render them excellent
 soldiers, he was far from despising them for their
 present want of experience; and he employed all
 his art to detach them from the alliance of
 Burgundy. When Edward sent him a herald to
 claim the crown of France, and to carry him a
 defiance in case of refusal: so far from answering
 to this bravado in like haughty terms, he replied
 with great temper, and even made the herald a
 considerable present ⁸⁰: He took afterwards an
 opportunity of sending a herald to the English
 camp; and having given him directions to apply
 to the lords Stanley and Howard, who, he heard,
 29th Aug. were friends to peace, he desired the good offices
 of these noblemen in promoting an accommoda-
 tion with their master ⁸¹. As Edward was now
 fallen into like dispositions, a truce was soon
 concluded on terms more advantageous than
 honorable to Lewis. He stipulated to pay Ed-
 ward immediately 75,000 crowns, on condition
 that he should withdraw his army from France,
 and promised to pay him 50,000 crowns a year
 during their joint lives: It was added, that the
 dauphin, when of age, should marry Edward's

Peace of
 Picquigni.

⁷⁹ Comines, liv. 4. chap. 5.
 chap. 5. Hall, fol. 227.

⁸⁰ Comines, liv. 4.
⁸¹ Comines, liv. 4. chap. 7.

C H A P. himself very carefully observe so prudent a rule:
 XXII. He could not forbear, one day, in the joy of his
 1475. heart, throwing out some raillery on the easy
 simplicity of Edward and his council; when he
 perceived, that he was overheard by a Gascon,
 who had settled in England. He was immediate-
 ly sensible of his indiscretion; sent a message to
 the gentleman; and offered him such advantages
 in his own country, as engaged him to remain
 in France. *It is but just, said he, that I pay the
 penalty of my talkativeness*⁸⁷.

THE most honorable part of Lewis's treaty with
 Edward was the stipulation for the liberty of
 queen Margaret, who, though after the death of
 her husband and son she could no longer be for-
 midable to government, was still detained in
 custody by Edward. Lewis paid fifty thousand
 crowns for her ransom; and that princess, who
 had been so active on the stage of the world,
 and who had experienced such a variety of for-
 tune, passed the remainder of her days in tran-
 quillity and privacy, till the year 1482, when she
 died: An admirable princess, but more illustrious
 by her undaunted spirit in adversity, than by her
 moderation in prosperity. She seems neither to
 have enjoyed the virtues, nor been subject to
 the weakneses of her sex; and was as much
 tainted with the ferocity, as endowed with the
 courage, of that barbarous age, in which she
 lived.

⁸⁷ Comines, liv. 3. chap. 10.

THOUGH Edward had so little reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the duke of Burgundy, he reserved to that prince a power of acceding to the treaty of Pecquigni: But Charles, when the offer was made him, haughtily replied, that he was able to support himself without the assistance of England, and that he would make no peace with Lewis, till three months after Edward's return into his own country. This prince possessed all the ambition and courage of a conqueror; but being defective in policy and prudence, qualities no less essential, he was unfortunate in all his enterprizes; and perished at last in battle against the Swiss⁸⁸; a people whom he despised, and who, though brave and free, had hitherto been in a manner overlooked in the general system of Europe. This event, which happened in the year 1477, produced a great alteration in the views of all the princes, and was attended with consequences which were felt for many generations. Charles left only one daughter, Mary, by his first wife; and this princess, being heir of his opulent and extensive dominions, was courted by all the potentates of Christendom, who contended for the possession of so rich a prize. Lewis, the head of her family, might, by a proper application, have obtained this match for the dauphin, and have thereby united to the crown of France all the provinces of the Low Countries, together with Burgundy,

C H A P.
XXII.

1477.

⁸⁸ Comines, liv. 5. chap. 8.

С И А Р. Artois, and Picardy; which would at once have rendered his kingdom an overmatch for all its neighbours. But a man wholly interested is as rare as one entirely endowed with the opposite quality; and Lewis, though impregnable to all the sentiments of generosity and friendship, was, on this occasion, carried from the road of true policy by the passions of animosity and revenge. He had imbibed so deep a hatred to the house of Burgundy, that he rather chose to subdue the princess by arms, than unite her to his family by marriage: He conquered the dutchy of Burgundy and that part of Picardy, which had been ceded to Philip the Good by the treaty of Arras: But he thereby forced the states of the Netherlands to bestow their sovereign in marriage on Maximilian of Austria, son of the emperor Frederic, from whom they looked for protection in their present distresses: And by these means, France lost the opportunity, which she never could recal, of making that important acquisition of power and territory.

DURING this interesting crisis, Edward was no less defective in policy, and was no less actuated by private passions, unworthy of a sovereign and a statesman. Jealousy of his brother, Clarence, had caused him to neglect the advances which were made of marrying that prince, now a widower, to the heiress of Burgundy⁸⁹; and he sent

⁸⁹ Polyd. Virg. Hall, fol. 240. Hollingshed, p. 703. Habington, p. 474. Grafton, p. 742.

her propofals of espoufing Anthony earl of Rivers, brother to his queen, who ftill retained an entire afcendant over him. But the match was rejected with difdain⁹⁰; and Edward, refenting this treatment of his brother-in-law, permitted France to proceed without interruption in her conquelts over his defencelefs ally. Any pretence fufficed him for abandoning himfelf entirely to indolence and pleafure, which were now become his ruling paffions. The only object, which divided his attention, was the improving of the public revenue, which had been dilapidated by the neceffities or negligence of his predeceffors; and fome of his expedients for that purpofe, though unknown to us, were deemed, during the time, oppreffive to the people⁹¹. The detail of private wrongs naturally efapes the notice of hiftory; but an act of tyranny, of which Edward was guilty in his own family, has been taken notice of by all writers, and has met with general and deferved censure.

THE duke of Clarence, by all his fervices in deferting Warwic, had never been able to regain the king's friendship, which he had forfeited by his former confederacy with that nobleman. He was ftill regarded at court as a man of a dangerous and a fickle character; and the imprudent opennefs and violence of his temper, though it rendered him much lefs dangerous, tended ex-

Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence.

⁹⁰ Hall, fol. 240.
p. 559.

⁹¹ Ibid. 241. Hift. Croyl. cont.

S H A P. tremely to multiply his enemies, and to incense
XXII. them against him. Among others, he had had
1477. the misfortune to give displeasure to the queen
 herself, as well as to his brother, the duke of
 Glocester, a prince of the deepest policy, of the
 most unrelenting ambition, and the least scrupulous
 in the means which he employed for the
 attainment of his ends. A combination between
 these potent adversaries being secretly formed
 against Clarence, it was determined to begin by
 attacking his friends; in hopes, that, if he patiently
 endured this injury, his pusillanimity would
 dishonor him in the eyes of the public; if he
 made resistance and expressed resentment, his
 passion would betray him into measures, which
 might give them advantages against him. The
 king, hunting one day in the park of Thomas
 Burdet of Arrow, in Warwickshire, had killed
 a white buck, which was a great favorite of the
 owner; and Burdet, vexed at the loss, broke into
 a passion, and wished the horns of the deer in the
 belly of the person, who had advised the king to
 commit that insult upon him. This natural expression
 of resentment, which would have been overlooked
 or forgotten, had it fallen from any other person,
 was rendered criminal and capital in that gentleman,
 by the friendship in which he had the misfortune
 to live with the duke of Clarence: He was tried for
 his life; the judges and jury were found servile
 enough to condemn him; and he was publicly
 beheaded at Tyburn

for this pretended offence⁹². About the same time, one John Stacey, an ecclesiastic, much connected with the duke, as well as with Burdet, was exposed to a like iniquitous and barbarous prosecution. This clergyman, being more learned in mathematics and astronomy than was usual in that age, lay under the imputation of necromancy with the ignorant vulgar; and the court laid hold of this popular rumor to effect his destruction. He was brought to his trial for that imaginary crime; many of the greatest peers countenanced the prosecution by their presence; he was condemned, put to the torture, and executed⁹³.

THE duke of Clarence was alarmed, when he found these acts of tyranny exercised on all around him: He reflected on the fate of the good duke of Gloucester in the last reign, who, after seeing the most infamous pretences employed for the destruction of his nearest connexions, at last fell himself a victim to the vengeance of his enemies. But Clarence, instead of securing his own life against the present danger, by silence and reserve, was open and loud in justifying the innocence of his friends, and in exclaiming against the iniquity of their prosecutors. The king, highly offended with his freedom, or using that pretence against him, committed him to the Tower⁹⁴, summoned a parliament, and tried him for his

⁹² Habington, p. 475. Hollingshed, p. 703. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 498.

⁹³ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 561.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 562.

C H A P. life before the house of peers, the supreme tri-
XXII. bunal of the nation.

1478.

16th Jan.

THE duke was accused of arraigning public justice, by maintaining the innocence of men, who had been condemned in courts of judicature; and of inveighing against the iniquity of the king, who had given orders for their prosecution⁹⁵. Many rash expressions were imputed to him, and some too reflecting on Edward's legitimacy; but he was not accused of any overt act of treason; and even the truth of these speeches may be doubted of, since the liberty of judgment was taken from the court, by the king's appearing personally as his brother's accuser⁹⁶, and pleading the cause against him. But a sentence of condemnation, even when this extraordinary circumstance had not place, was a necessary consequence, in those times, of any prosecution by the court or the prevailing party; and the duke of Clarence was pronounced guilty by the peers. The house of commons were no less slavish and unjust: They both petitioned for the execution of the duke, and afterwards passed a bill of attainder against him⁹⁷. The measures of the parliament, during that age, furnish us with examples of a strange contrast of freedom and servility: They scruple to grant, and sometimes refuse, to the king the smallest supplies, the most necessary for the support of government, even the most

⁹⁵ Stowe, p. 430.

⁹⁶ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

⁹⁷ Stowe, p. 430. Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

necessary for the maintenance of wars, for which the nation, as well as the parliament itself, expressed great fondness: But they never scruple to concur in the most flagrant act of injustice or tyranny, which falls on any individual, however distinguished by birth or merit. These maxims, so ungenerous, so opposite to all principles of good government, so contrary to the practice of present parliaments, are very remarkable in all the transactions of the English history for more than a century after the period in which we are now engaged.

C H A P.
XXII.
1478.

THE only favor, which the king granted his brother, after his condemnation, was to leave him the choice of his death; and he was privately drowned in a butt of malmesey in the Tower: A whimsical choice, which implies that he had an extraordinary passion for that liquor. The duke left two children, by the elder daughter of the earl of Warwick; a son created an earl by his grandfather's title, and a daughter, afterwards countess of Salisbury. Both this prince and princess were also unfortunate in their end, and died a violent death; a fate, which, for many years, attended almost all the descendants of the royal blood in England. There prevails a report, that a chief source of the violent prosecution of the duke of Clarence, whose name was George, was a current prophecy, that the king's sons should be murdered by one, the initial letter of whose

18th Feb.

C H A P. name was G⁹⁸. It is not impossible, but, in
 XXII. those ignorant times, such a silly reason might
 1478. have some influence: But it is more probable,
 that the whole story is the invention of a subsequent period, and founded on the murder of these children by the duke of Gloucester. Comines remarks, that, at that time, the English never were without some superstitious prophecy or other, by which they accounted for every event.

ALL the glories of Edward's reign terminated with the civil wars; where his laurels too were extremely sullied with blood, violence, and cruelty. His spirit seems afterwards to have been sunk in indolence and pleasure, or his measures were frustrated by imprudence and the want of foresight. There was no object, on which he was more intent, than to have all his daughters settled by splendid marriages, though most of these princesses were yet in their infancy, and though the completion of his views, it was obvious, must depend on numberless accidents, which were impossible to be foreseen or prevented. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was contracted to the dauphin; his second, Cicely, to the eldest son of James III. king of Scotland; his third, Anne, to Philip, only son of Maximilian and the dutchess of Burgundy; his fourth, Catharine, to John, son and heir to Ferdinand, king of Arragon,

⁹⁸ Hall, fol. 239. Hollingshed, p. 703. Grafton, p. 741. Polyd. Virg. p. 537. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 497.

and Isabella, queen of Castile⁹⁹. None of these projected marriages took place; and the king himself saw in his life-time the rupture of the first, that with the dauphin, for which he had always discovered a peculiar fondness. Lewis, who paid no regard to treaties or engagements, found his advantage in contracting the dauphin to the princess Margaret, daughter of Maximilian; and the king, notwithstanding his indolence, prepared to revenge the indignity. The French monarch, eminent for prudence, as well as perfidy, endeavoured to guard against the blow; and by a proper distribution of presents in the court of Scotland, he incited James to make war upon England. This prince, who lived on bad terms with his own nobility, and whose force was very unequal to the enterprize, levied an army; but when he was ready to enter England, the barons, conspiring against his favorites, put them to death without trial; and the army presently disbanded. The duke of Gloucester, attended by the duke of Albany, James's brother, who had been banished his country, entered Scotland at the head of an army, took Berwic, and obliged the Scots to accept of a peace, by which they resigned that fortress to Edward. This success emboldened the king to think more seriously of a French war; but while he was making preparations for that enterprize, he was seized with a distemper, of which he expired in the forty-second

C H A P.
XXII.

1482.

⁹⁹ Rymer, vol. xi. p. 110.

C H A P. year of his age, and the twenty-third of his
XXII. reign: A prince more splendid and showy, than
 1482. either prudent or virtuous; brave, though cruel;
 9th April. addicted to pleasure, though capable of activity in
 Death and great emergencies; and less fitted to prevent ills by
 character of wise precautions, than to remedy them, after they
 Edward IV. took place, by his vigor and enterprize. Besides
 five daughters, this king left two sons; Edward,
 prince of Wales, his successor, then in his thir-
 teenth year, and Richard, duke of York, in his
 ninth.

C H A P. XXIII.

EDWARD V. and RICHARD III.

Edward V. — State of the court — The earl of Rivers arrested — Duke of Gloucester protector — Execution of Lord Hastings — The protector aims at the crown — Assumes the crown — Murder of Edward V. and of the duke of York — Richard III. — Duke of Buckingham discontented — The earl of Richmond — Buckingham executed — Invasion by the earl of Richmond — Battle of Bosworth — Death and character of Richard III.

E D W A R D V.

DURING the later years of Edward IV. the nation, having, in a great measure, forgotten the bloody feuds between the two roses, and peaceably acquiescing in the established government, was agitated only by some court-intrigues, which, being restrained by the authority of the king, seemed no wise to endanger the public tranquillity. These intrigues arose from the perpetual rivalry between two parties; one consisting of the queen and her relations, particularly the earl of Rivers, her brother, and the marquis of Dorset, her son; the other composed of the ancient nobility, who envied the sudden growth and unlimited credit of that aspiring family¹.

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

State of the court.

¹ Sir Thomas More, p. 481.

C H A P. At the head of this latter party was the duke of
 XXIII. Buckingham, a man of very noble birth, of
 1483. ample possessions, of great alliances, of shining
 parts; who, though he had married the queen's
 sister, was too haughty to act in subserviency to
 her inclinations, and aimed rather at maintaining
 an independent influence and authority. Lord
 Hastings, the chamberlain, was another leader
 of the same party; and as this nobleman had, by
 his bravery and activity, as well as by his ap-
 proved fidelity, acquired the confidence and favor
 of his master, he had been able, though with
 some difficulty, to support himself against the
 credit of the queen. The lords Howard and
 Stanley maintained a connexion with these two
 noblemen, and brought a considerable accession
 of influence and reputation to their party. All
 the other barons, who had no particular depend-
 ence on the queen, adhered to the same interest;
 and the people in general, from their natural
 envy against the prevailing power, bore great
 favor to the cause of these noblemen.

BUT Edward knew, that, though he himself
 had been able to overawe those rival factions,
 many disorders might arise from their contests
 during the minority of his son; and he therefore
 took care, in his last illness, to summon together
 several of the leaders on both sides, and, by
 composing their ancient quarrels, to provide, as
 far as possible, for the future tranquillity of the
 government. After expressing his intentions,
 that his brother, the duke of Gloucester, then

absent in the north, should be intrusted with the regency, he recommended to them peace and unanimity during the tender years of his son; represented to them the dangers which must attend the continuance of their animosities; and engaged them to embrace each other with all the appearance of the most cordial reconciliation. But this temporary or feigned agreement lasted no longer than the king's life: He had no sooner expired, than the jealousies of the parties broke out afresh: And each of them applied, by separate messages, to the duke of Gloucester, and endeavoured to acquire his favor and friendship.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

THIS prince, during his brother's reign, had endeavoured to live on good terms with both parties; and his high birth, his extensive abilities, and his great services, had enabled him to support himself without falling into a dependence on either. But the new situation of affairs, when the supreme power was devolved upon him, immediately changed his measures; and he secretly determined to preserve no longer that neutrality which he had hitherto maintained. His exorbitant ambition, unrestrained by any principle either of justice or humanity, made him carry his views to the possession of the crown itself; and as this object could not be attained without the ruin of the queen and her family, he fell, without hesitation, into concert with the opposite party. But being sensible, that the most profound dissimulation was requisite for effecting his criminal purposes, he redoubled his professions of zeal and attachment to that princess;

C H A P. and he gained such credit with her, as to influence
 XXIII. her conduct in a point, which, as it was of the
 1483. utmost importance, was violently disputed between the opposite factions.

THE young king, at the time of his father's death, resided in the castle of Ludlow, on the borders of Wales; whither he had been sent, that the influence of his presence might overawe the Welsh, and restore the tranquillity of that country, which had been disturbed by some late commotions. His person was committed to the care of his uncle, the earl of Rivers, the most accomplished nobleman in England, who, having united an uncommon taste for literature² to great abilities in business, and valor in the field, was entitled, by his talents, still more than by nearness of blood, to direct the education of the young monarch. The queen, anxious to preserve that ascendant over her son, which she had long maintained over her husband, wrote to the earl of Rivers, that he should levy a body of forces, in order to escort the king to London, to protect him during his coronation, and to keep him from falling into the hands of their enemies. The opposite faction, sensible that Edward was now of an age when great advantages could be made of his name and countenance, and was approaching

² This nobleman first introduced the noble art of printing into England. Caxton was recommended by him to the patronage of Edward IV. See Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors.

to the age when he would be legally entitled to exert in person his authority, foresaw, that the tendency of this measure was to perpetuate their subjection under their rivals; and they vehemently opposed a resolution, which they represented as the signal for renewing a civil war in the kingdom. Lord Hastings threatened to depart instantly to his government of Calais³: The other nobles seemed resolute to oppose force by force: And as the duke of Gloucester, on pretence of pacifying the quarrel, had declared against all appearance of an armed power, which might be dangerous, and was nowise necessary, the queen, trusting to the sincerity of his friendship, and overawed by so violent an opposition, recalled her orders to her brother, and desired him to bring up no greater retinue than should be necessary to support the state and dignity of the young sovereign⁴.

THE duke of Gloucester, meanwhile, set out from York, attended by a numerous train of the northern gentry. When he reached Northampton, he was joined by the duke of Buckingham, who was also attended by a splendid retinue; and as he heard that the king was hourly expected on that road, he resolved to await his arrival, under color of conducting him thence in person to London. The earl of Rivers, apprehensive that the place would be too narrow to contain so

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

³ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565.
p. 483.

⁴ Sir T. More,

C H A P. many attendants, sent his pupil forward by
 XXIII. another road to Stony-Stratford; and came him-
 1483. self to Northampton, in order to apologize for
 this measure, and to pay his respects to the duke
 of Gloucester. He was received with the greatest
 appearance of cordiality: He passed the evening
 in an amicable manner with Gloucester and Buck-
 ington: He proceeded on the road with them
 next day to join the king: But as he was entering
 Stony-Stratford, he was arrested by orders from
 the duke of Gloucester¹: Sir Richard Gray, one
 of the queen's sons, was at the same time put
 under a guard, together with Sir Thomas
 Vaughan, who possessed a considerable office in
 the king's household; and all the prisoners were
 instantly conducted to Pomfret. Gloucester ap-
 proached the young prince with the greatest
 demonstrations of respect; and endeavoured to
 satisfy him with regard to the violence committed
 on his uncle and brother: But Edward, much
 attached to these near relations, by whom he had
 been tenderly educated, was not such a master
 of dissimulation as to conceal his displeasure².

The earl of
 Rivers ar-
 rested.
 1th May.

4th May.

THE people, however, were extremely rejoiced
 at this revolution; and the duke was received
 in London with the loudest acclamations: But
 the queen no sooner received intelligence of her
 brother's imprisonment, than she foresaw, that
 Gloucester's violence would not stop there, and

¹ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565.
 p. 484.

² Sir T. More.

that her own ruin, if not that of all her children, was finally determined. She therefore fled into the sanctuary of Westminster, attended by the marquis of Dorset; and she carried thither the five princesses, together with the duke of York⁷. She trusted, that the ecclesiastical privileges, which had formerly, during the total ruin of her husband and family, given her protection against the fury of the Lancastrian faction, would not now be violated by her brother-in-law, while her son was on the throne; and she resolved to await there the return of better fortune. But Gloucester, anxious to have the duke of York in his power, proposed to take him by force from the sanctuary; and he represented to the privy-council, both the indignity put upon the government by the queen's ill-grounded apprehensions, and the necessity of the young prince's appearance at the ensuing coronation of his brother. It was farther urged, that ecclesiastical privileges were originally intended only to give protection to unhappy men, persecuted for their debts or crimes; and were entirely useless to a person, who, by reason of his tender age, could lie under the burden of neither, and who, for the same reason, was utterly incapable of claiming security from any sanctuary. But the two archbishops, cardinal Bourchier, the primate, and Rotherham archbishop of York, protesting against the sacrilege of this measure; it was agreed, that they should

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

⁷ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 565.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

first endeavour to bring the queen to compliance by persuasion, before any violence should be employed against her. These prelates were persons of known integrity and honor; and being themselves entirely persuaded of the duke's good intentions, they employed every argument, accompanied with earnest entreaties, exhortations, and assurances, to bring her over to the same opinion. She long continued obstinate, and insisted, that the duke of York, by living in the sanctuary, was not only secure himself, but gave security to the king, whose life no one would dare to attempt, while his successor and avenger remained in safety. But finding, that none supported her in these sentiments, and that force, in case of refusal, was threatened by the council, she at last complied, and produced her son to the two prelates. She was here on a sudden struck with a kind of presage of his future fate: She tenderly embraced him; she bedewed him with her tears; and bidding him an eternal adieu, delivered him, with many expressions of regret and reluctance, into their custody^s.

Duke of
Glocester
protector.

THE duke of Gloucester, being the nearest male of the royal family, capable of exercising the government, seemed entitled, by the customs of the realm, to the office of protector; and the council, not waiting for the consent of parliament, made no scruple of investing him with that high dignity^s. The general prejudice, entertained by

^s Sir T, More, p. 491. ^s Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 566.

the nobility against the queen and her kindred, occasioned this precipitation and irregularity; and no one foresaw any danger to the succession, much less to the lives, of the young princes, from a measure so obvious and so natural. Besides that the duke had hitherto been able to cover, by the most profound dissimulation, his fierce and savage nature; the numerous issue of Edward, together with the two children of Clarence, seemed to be an eternal obstacle to his ambition; and it appeared equally impracticable for him to destroy so many persons possessed of a preferable title, and imprudent to exclude them. But a man, who had abandoned all principles of honor and humanity, was soon carried by his predominant passion beyond the reach of fear or precaution; and Gloucester, having so far succeeded in his views, no longer hesitated in removing the other obstructions, which lay between him and the throne. The death of the earl of Rivers, and of the other prisoners detained in Pomfret, was first determined; and he easily obtained the consent of the duke of Buckingham, as well as of lord Hastings, to this violent and sanguinary measure. However easy it was, in those times, to procure a sentence against the most innocent person, it appeared still more easy to dispatch an enemy, without any trial or form of process; and orders were accordingly issued to Sir Richard Ratcliffe, a proper instrument in the hands of this tyrant, to cut off the heads of the prisoners. The protector then assailed the fidelity of Buckingham by

C H A P. all the arguments capable of swaying a vicious
 XXIII. mind, which knew no motive of action but inter-
 1483. est and ambition. He represented, that the
 execution of persons so nearly related to the king,
 whom that prince so openly professed to love,
 and whose fate he so much resented, would never
 pass unpunished; and all the actors in that scene
 were bound in prudence to prevent the effects of
 his future vengeance: That it would be impos-
 sible to keep the queen for ever at a distance
 from her son, and equally impossible to prevent
 her from instilling into his tender mind the thoughts
 of retaliating, by like executions, the sanguinary
 insults committed on her family: That the only
 method of obviating these mischiefs was to put
 the sceptre in the hands of a man, of whose
 friendship the duke might be assured, and whose
 years and experience taught him to pay respect
 to merit and to the rights of ancient nobility:
 And that the same necessity, which had carried
 them so far in resisting the usurpation of these
 intruders, must justify them in attempting farther
 innovations, and in making, by national consent,
 a new settlement of the succession. To these
 reasons, he added the offers of great private
 advantages to the duke of Buckingham; and he
 easily obtained from him a promise of supporting
 him in all his enterprises.

THE duke of Gloucester, knowing the import-
 ance of gaining lord Hastings, sounded at a
 distance his sentiments, by means of Catesby, a

lawyer, who lived in great intimacy with that nobleman; but found him impregnable in his allegiance and fidelity to the children of Edward, who had ever honored him with his friendship¹⁰. He saw, therefore, that there were no longer any measures to be kept with him; and he determined to ruin utterly the man, whom he despaired of engaging to concur in his usurpation. On the very day when Rivers, Gray, and Vaughan were executed, or rather murdered, at Pomfret, by the advice of Hastings, the protector summoned a council in the Tower; whither that nobleman, suspecting no design against him, repaired without hesitation. The duke of Gloucester was capable of committing the most bloody and treacherous murders with the utmost coolness and indifference. On taking his place at the council-table, he appeared in the easiest and most jovial humor imaginable. He seemed to indulge himself in familiar conversation with the counsellors, before they should enter on business; and having paid some compliments to Morton, bishop of Ely, on the good and early strawberries which he raised in his garden at Holborn, he begged the favor of having a dish of them, which that prelate immediately dispatched a servant to bring to him. The protector then left the council, as if called away by some other business; but soon after returning with an angry and inflamed countenance, he asked them, what punishment those

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

13th June.

¹⁰ Sir T. More, p. 493.

G H A P

XXIII.

1483.

deserved that had plotted against *his* life, who was so nearly related to the king, and was intrusted with the administration of government? Hastings replied, that they merited the punishment of traitors. *These traitors*, cried the protector, *are the sorcerers, my brother's wife, and Jane Shore, his mistress, with others, their associates: See to what a condition they have reduced me by their incantations and witchcraft:* Upon which he laid bare his arm, all shrivelled and decayed. But the counsellors, who knew that this infirmity had attended him from his birth, looked on each other with amazement; and above all, lord Hastings, who, as he had, since Edward's death, engaged in an intrigue with Jane Shore¹¹, was naturally anxious concerning the issue of these extraordinary proceedings. *Certainly, my lord*, said he, *if they be guilty of these crimes, they deserve the severest punishment. And do you reply to me*, exclaimed the protector, *with your ifs and your ands? You are the chief abettor of that witch, Shore: You are yourself a traitor: And I swear by St. Paul, that I will not dine before your head be brought me.* He struck the table with his hand: Armed men rushed in at the signal: The counsellors were thrown into the utmost consternation: And one of the guards, as if by accident or mistake, aimed a blow with a poll-ax at lord Stanley, who, aware of the danger, flunk under the table; and though he saved his life, received a severe wound in the

¹¹ See note [C] at the end of the volume.

head, in the protector's presence. Hastings was seized, was hurried away, and instantly beheaded on a timber-log, which lay in the court of the Tower¹². Two hours after, a proclamation, well penned and fairly written, was read to the citizens of London, enumerating his offences, and apologizing to them, from the suddenness of the discovery, for the sudden execution of that nobleman, who was very popular among them: But the saying of a merchant was much talked of on the occasion, who remarked, that the proclamation was certainly drawn by the spirit of prophecy¹³.

LORD Stanley, the archbishop of York, the bishop of Ely, and other counsellors, were committed prisoners in different chambers of the Tower: And the protector, in order to carry on the farce of his accusations, ordered the goods of Jane Shore to be seized; and he summoned her to answer before the council for forcery and witchcraft. But as no proofs, which could be received even in that ignorant age, were produced against her, he directed her to be tried in the spiritual court, for her adulteries and lewdness; and she did penance in a white sheet at St. Paul's, before the whole people. This lady was born of reputable parents in London, was well educated, and married to a substantial citizen; but unhappily, views of interest, more than the maid's inclinations, had been consulted in the

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

Execution
of lord
Hastings.

¹² Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 566. ¹³ Sir T. More, p. 496.

G H A P. match, and her mind, though framed for virtue,
 XXIII. had proved unable to resist the allurements of
 1483. Edward, who solicited her favors. But while
 seduced from her duty by this gay and amorous
 monarch, she still made herself respectable by her
 other virtues; and the ascendant, which her
 charms and vivacity long maintained over him,
 was all employed in acts of beneficence and
 humanity. She was still forward to oppose
 calumny, to protect the oppressed, to relieve the
 indigent; and her good offices, the genuine
 dictates of her heart, never waited the solicitation
 of presents, or the hopes of reciprocal services.
 But she lived not only to feel the bitterness of
 shame imposed on her by this tyrant, but to
 experience, in old age and poverty, the ingra-
 titude of those courtiers, who had long solicited
 her friendship, and been protected by her credit.
 No one, among the great multitudes, whom she
 had obliged, had the humanity to bring her
 consolation or relief: She languished out her life
 in solitude and indigence: And amidst a court,
 inured to the most atrocious crimes, the frailties
 of this woman justified all violations of friendship
 towards her, and all neglect of former obligations.

The protec-
 tor aims at
 the crown.

THESE acts of violence, exercised against all
 the nearest connexions of the late king, prognosti-
 cated the severest fate to his defenceless children;
 and after the murder of Hastings, the protector
 no longer made a secret of his intentions to usurp
 the crown. The licentious life of Edward, who
 was not restrained in his pleasures either by honor

or prudence, afforded a pretence for declaring his marriage with the queen invalid, and all his posterity illegitimate. It was asserted, that, before espousing the lady Elizabeth Gray, he had paid court to the lady Eleanor Talbot, daughter to the earl of Shrewsbury; and being repulsed by the virtue of that lady, he was obliged, ere he could gratify his desires, to consent to a private marriage, without any witnesses, by Stillington, bishop of Bath, who afterwards divulged the secret¹⁴. It was also maintained, that the act of attainder, passed against the duke of Clarence, had virtually incapacitated his children from succeeding to the crown; and these two families being set aside, the protector remained the only true and legitimate heir of the house of York. But as it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove the preceding marriage of the late king; and as the rule, which excludes the heirs of an attainted blood from private successions, was never extended to the crown; the protector resolved to make use of another plea still more shameful and scandalous. His partisans were taught to maintain, that both Edward IV. and the duke of Clarence were illegitimate; that the dutchess of York had received different lovers into her bed, who were the fathers of these children; that their resemblance to those gallants was a sufficient proof of their spurious birth; and that

¹⁴ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 567. Comines. Sir Thom. More, p. 482.

C H A P. the duke of Gloucester alone, of all her sons,
 XXIII. appeared, by his features and countenance, to
 1483. be the true offspring of the duke of York. Nothing can be imagined more impudent than this assertion, which threw so foul an imputation on his own mother, a princess of irreproachable virtue, and then alive; yet the place chosen for first promulgating it was the pulpit, before a large congregation, and in the protector's presence. Dr. Shaw was appointed to preach in St. Paul's; and having chosen this passage for his text, *Bastard slips shall not thrive*, he enlarged on all the topics, which could discredit the birth of Edward IV. the duke of Clarence, and of all their children. He then broke out in a panegyric on the duke of Gloucester; and exclaimed, "Behold this excellent prince, the express image
 " of his noble father, the genuine descendant of
 " the house of York; bearing, no less in the
 " virtues of his mind, than in the features of his
 " countenance, the character of the gallant
 " Richard, once your hero and favorite: He
 " alone is entitled to your allegiance: He must
 " deliver you from the dominion of all intruders:
 " He alone can restore the lost glory and honor
 " of the nation." It was previously concerted, that, as the doctor should pronounce these words, the duke of Gloucester should enter the church; and it was expected that the audience would cry out, *God save King Richard*; which would immediately have been laid hold of as a popular consent, and interpreted to be the voice of the

22th June.

nation: But by a ridiculous mistake, worthy of C H A P.
the whole scene, the duke did not appear, till XXIII.
after this exclamation was already recited by the 1483.
preacher. The doctor was therefore obliged to
repeat his rhetorical figure out of its proper
place: The audience, less from the absurd con-
duct of the discourse, than from their detestation
of these proceedings, kept a profound silence:
And the protector and his preacher were equally
abashed at the ill success of their stratagem.

BUT the duke was too far advanced to recede
from his criminal and ambitious purpose. A new
expedient was tried to work on the people. The
mayor, who was brother to Dr. Shaw, and
entirely in the protector's interests, called an
assembly of the citizens; where the duke of
Buckingham, who possessed some talents for
eloquence, harangued them on the protector's
title to the crown, and displayed those numerous
virtues, of which, he pretended, that prince was
possessed. He next asked them, whether they
would have the duke for king? and then stopped,
in expectation of hearing the cry, *God save King
Richard*. He was surprised to observe them silent;
and turning about to the mayor, asked him the
reason. The mayor replied, that perhaps they
did not understand him. Buckingham then re-
peated his discourse with some variation; enforced
the same topics, asked the same question, and
was received with the same silence. "I now see
" the cause," said the mayor; "the citizens are
" not accustomed to be harangued by any but

CHAP. XXIII. 1483. " their recorder; and know not how to answer
 " a person of your grace's quality. " The re-
 corder, Eitz-Williams, was then commanded to
 repeat the substance of the duke's speech; but
 the man, who was averse to the office, took
 care, throughout his whole discourse, to have it
 understood, that he spoke nothing of himself,
 and that he only conveyed to them the sense of
 the duke of Buckingham. Still the audience kept
 a profound silence: " This is wonderful obstinacy,"
 cried the duke: " Express your meaning, my
 " friends, one way or other: When we apply to
 " you on this occasion, it is merely from the
 " regard which we bear to you. The lords and
 " commons have sufficient authority, without your
 " consent, to appoint a king: But I require you
 " here to declare in plain terms, whether or not
 " you will have the duke of Gloucester for your
 " sovereign. " After all these efforts, some of the
 meanest apprentices, incited by the protector's
 and Buckingham's servants, raised a feeble cry,
God save king Richard": The sentiments of the
 nation were now sufficiently declared: The voice
 of the people was the voice of God: And Buck-
 25th June. ingham, with the mayor, hastened to Baynard's
 castle, where the protector then resided, that they
 might make him a tender of the crown.

WHEN Richard was told, that a great multitude
 was in the court, he refused to appear to them,
 and pretended to be apprehensive for his personal

" Sir Thomas More, p. 496.

safety: A circumstance taken notice of by Buckingham, who observed to the citizens, that the prince was ignorant of the whole design. At last, he was persuaded to step forth, but he still kept at some distance; and he asked the meaning of their intrusion and importunity. Buckingham told him, that the nation was resolved to have him for king: The protector declared his purpose of maintaining his loyalty to the present sovereign, and exhorted them to adhere to the same resolution. He was told, that the people had determined to have another prince; and if he rejected their unanimous voice, they must look out for one who would be more compliant. This argument was too powerful to be resisted: He was prevailed on to accept of the crown: And he thenceforth acted as legitimate and rightful sovereign.

THIS ridiculous farce was soon after followed by a scene truly tragical: The murder of the two young princes. Richard gave orders to Sir Robert Brakenbury, constable of the Tower, to put his nephews to death; but this gentleman, who had sentiments of honor, refused to have any hand in the infamous office. The tyrant then sent for Sir James Tyrrel, who promised obedience; and he ordered Brakenbury to resign to this gentleman the keys and government of the Tower for one night. Tyrrel, chusing three associates, Slater, Dighton, and Forest, came in the night-time to the door of the chamber where the princes were lodged; and sending in the assassins, he bade them execute their commission, while he

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

The protector assumes the throne.

Murder of Edward V. and of the duke of York.

C H A P. himself staid without. They found the young
 XXIII. princes in bed, and fallen into a profound sleep.
 1483. After suffocating them with the bolster and
 pillows, they showed their naked bodies to Tyrrel,
 who ordered them to be buried at the foot of
 the stairs, deep in the ground, under a heap of
 stones ¹⁶. These circumstances were all confessed
 by the actors, in the following reign; and they
 were never punished for the crime: Probably,
 because Henry, whose maxims of government
 were extremely arbitrary, desired to establish it
 as a principle, that the commands of the reigning
 sovereign ought to justify every enormity in those
 who paid obedience to them. But there is one
 circumstance not so easy to be accounted for: It
 is pretended, that Richard, displeased with the
 indecent manner of burying his nephews, whom
 he had murdered, gave his chaplain orders to dig
 up the bodies, and to inter them in consecrated
 ground; and as the man died soon after, the place
 of their burial remained unknown, and the bodies
 could never be found by any search, which
 Henry could make for them. Yet in the reign of
 Charles II. when there was occasion to remove
 some stones, and to dig in the very spot, which
 was mentioned as the place of their first inter-
 ment, the bones of two persons were there found,
 which by their size exactly corresponded to the
 age of Edward and his brother: They were con-
 cluded with certainty to be the remains of those

¹⁶ Sir T. More, p. 501.

princes, and were interred under a marble monument by orders of king Charles ¹⁷. Perhaps, Richard's chaplain had died before he found an opportunity of executing his master's commands; and the bodies being supposed to be already removed, a diligent search was not made for them by Henry, in the place where they had been buried.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

R I C H A R D III.

THE first acts of Richard's administration were to bestow rewards on those who had assisted him in usurping the crown, and to gain by favors those, who, he thought, were best able to support his future government. Thomas, lord Howard, was created duke of Norfolk; Sir Thomas Howard, his son, earl of Surry; lord Lovel, a viscount, by the same name; even lord Stanley was set at liberty and made steward of the household. This nobleman had become obnoxious by his first opposition to Richard's views, and also by his marrying the countess dowager of Richmond, heir of the Somerset family; but sensible of the necessity of submitting to the present government, he feigned such zeal for Richard's service, that he was received into favor, and even found

¹⁷ Kennet, p. 551.

C H A P. means to be intrusted with the most important
XXIII. commands by that politic and jealous tyrant.

1483.

BUT the person, who, both from the greatness of his services, and the power and splendor of his family, was best entitled to favors under the new government, was the duke of Buckingham; and Richard seemed determined to spare no pains or bounty in securing him to his interests. Buckingham was descended from a daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, uncle to Richard II. and by this pedigree, he not only was allied to the royal family, but had claims for dignities as well as estates, of a very extensive nature. The duke of Gloucester, and Henry earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV. had married the two daughters and co-heirs of Bohun, earl of Hereford, one of the greatest of the ancient barons, whose immense property came thus to be divided into two shares. One was inherited by the family of Buckingham; the other was united to the crown by the house of Lancaster, and after the attainder of that royal line, was seized as legally devolved to them, by the sovereigns of the house of York. The duke of Buckingham laid hold of the present opportunity, and claimed the restitution of that portion of the Hereford estate, which had escheated to the crown, as well as of the great office of constable, which had long continued by inheritance in his ancestors of that family. Richard readily complied with these demands, which were probably the price stipulated to Buckingham for his assistance in

promoting the usurpation. That nobleman was invested with the office of constable; he received a grant of the estate of Hereford¹⁸; many other dignities and honors were conferred upon him; and the king thought himself sure of preserving the fidelity of a man, whose interests seemed so closely connected with those of the present government.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

BUT it was impossible, that friendship could long remain inviolate between two men of such corrupt minds as Richard and the duke of Buckingham. Historians ascribe their first rupture to the king's refusal of making restitution of the Hereford estate; but it is certain from records, that he passed a grant for that purpose, and that the full demands of Buckingham were satisfied in this particular. Perhaps, Richard was soon sensible of the danger which might ensue from conferring such an immense property on a man of so turbulent a disposition, and afterwards raised difficulties about the execution of his own grant: Perhaps, he refused some other demands of Buckingham, whom he found it impossible to gratify for his past services: Perhaps, he resolved, according to the usual maxim of politicians, to seize the first opportunity of ruining this powerful subject, who had been the principal instrument of his own elevation; and the discovery of this intention begat the first discontent in the duke of Buckingham. However this may be, it is certain,

Duke of
Buckingham
discontented.

¹⁸ Dugdale's Baron. vol. i. p. 168, 169.

C H A P. that the duke, soon after Richard's accession,
 XXIII. began to form a conspiracy against the govern-
 1483. ment, and attempted to overthrow that usurpa-
 tion, which he himself had so zealously con-
 tributed to establish.

NEVER was there in any country an usurpation more flagrant than that of Richard, or more repugnant to every principle of justice and public interest. His claim was entirely founded on impudent allegations, never attempted to be proved, some of them incapable of proof, and all of them implying scandalous reflections on his own family, and on the persons with whom he was the most nearly connected. His title was never acknowledged by any national assembly, scarcely even by the lowest populace to whom he appealed; and it had become prevalent merely for want of some person of distinction, who might stand forth against him, and give a voice to those sentiments of general detestation, which arose in every bosom. Were men disposed to pardon these violations of public right, the sense of private and domestic duty, which is not to be effaced in the most barbarous times, must have begotten an abhorrence against him; and have represented the murder of the young and innocent princes, his nephews, with whose protection he had been intrusted, in the most odious colors imaginable. To endure such a bloody usurper seemed to draw disgrace upon the nation, and to be attended with immediate danger to every individual, who was distinguished by birth, merit, or services.

Such

Such was become the general voice of the people; all parties were united in the same sentiments; and the Lancastrians, so long oppressed, and, of late, so much discredited, felt their blasted hopes again revived, and anxiously expected the consequences of these extraordinary events. The duke of Buckingham, whose family had been devoted to that interest, and who, by his mother, a daughter of Edmund, duke of Somerset, was allied to the house of Lancaster, was easily induced to espouse the cause of this party, and to endeavour the restoring of it to its ancient superiority. Morton, bishop of Ely, a zealous Lancastrian, whom the king had imprisoned, and had afterwards committed to the custody of Buckingham, encouraged these sentiments; and by his exhortations the duke cast his eye towards the young earl of Richmond, as the only person who could free the nation from the tyranny of the present usurper ¹⁹.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

HENRY, earl of Richmond, was at this time detained in a kind of honorable custody by the duke of Brittany, and his descent, which seemed to give him some pretensions to the crown, had been a great object of jealousy both in the late and in the present reign, John, the first duke of Somerset, who was grandson of John of Gaunt, by a spurious branch, but legitimated by act of parliament, had left only one daughter, Margaret; and his younger brother, Edmund, had succeeded

The earl of
Richmond.

¹⁹ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 568.

C H A P. him in his titles, and in a considerable part of his
XXIII. fortune. Margaret had espoused Edmund, earl
1483. of Richmond, half brother of Henry VI. and son
of Sir Owen Tudor and Catharine of France,
relict of Henry V. and she bore him only one
son, who received the name of Henry, and who,
after his father's death, inherited the honors and
fortune of Richmond. His mother, being a widow,
had espoused in second marriage Sir Henry
Stafford, uncle to Buckingham, and after the
death of that gentleman, had married lord Stanley;
but had no children by either of these husbands;
and her son, Henry, was thus, in the event of
her death, the sole heir of all her fortunes. But
this was not the most considerable advantage,
which he had reason to expect from her succession:
He would represent the elder branch of the house
of Somerset; he would inherit all the title of that
family to the crown; and though its claim, while
any legitimate branch subsisted of the house of
Lancaster, had always been much disregarded,
the zeal of faction, after the death of Henry VI.
and the murder of prince Edward, immediately
conferred a weight and consideration upon it.

EDWARD IV. finding, that all the Lancastrians
had turned their attention towards the young earl
of Richmond, as the object of their hopes,
thought him also worthy of his attention; and
pursued him into his retreat in Brittany, whither
his uncle, the earl of Pembroke, had carried him,
after the battle of Tewkesbury, so fatal to his

party. He applied to Francis II. duke of Britanny, who was his ally, a weak but a good prince; and urged him to deliver up this fugitive, who might be the source of future disturbances in England: But the duke, averse to so dishonorable a proposal, would only consent, that, for the security of Edward, the young nobleman should be detained in custody; and he received an annual pension from England for the safe keeping or the subsistence of his prisoner. But towards the end of Edward's reign, when the kingdom was menaced with a war both from France and Scotland, the anxieties of the English court with regard to Henry were much increased; and Edward made a new proposal to the duke, which covered, under the fairest appearances, the most bloody and treacherous intentions. He pretended, that he was desirous of gaining his enemy, and of uniting him to his own family by a marriage with his daughter, Elizabeth; and he solicited to have him sent over to England, in order to execute a scheme, which would redound so much to his advantage. These pretences, seconded, as is supposed, by bribes to Peter Landais, a corrupt minister, by whom the duke was entirely governed, gained credit with the court of Britanny: Henry was delivered into the hands of the English agents: He was ready to embark: When a suspicion of Edward's real design was suggested to the duke, who recalled his orders, and thus saved the un-

CHAP. happy youth from the imminent danger which
XXIII. hung over him.

1483.

THESE symptoms of continued jealousy in the reigning family of England both seemed to give some authority to Henry's pretensions, and made him the object of general favor and compassion, on account of the dangers and persecutions to which he was exposed. The universal detestation of Richard's conduct turned still more the attention of the nation towards Henry; and as all the descendants of the house of York were either women or minors, he seemed to be the only person, from whom the nation could expect the expulsion of the odious and bloody tyrant. But notwithstanding these circumstances, which were so favorable to him, Buckingham and the bishop of Ely well knew, that there would still lie many obstacles in his way to the throne; and that though the nation had been much divided between Henry VI. and the duke of York, while present possession and hereditary right stood in opposition to each other; yet, as soon as these titles were united in Edward IV. the bulk of the people had come over to the reigning family; and the Lancastrians had extremely decayed, both in numbers and in authority. It was therefore suggested by Morton, and readily assented to by the duke, that the only means of overturning the present usurpation, was to unite the opposite factions, by contracting a marriage between the earl of Richmond and the princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of king Edward, and thereby

blending together the opposite pretensions of their families, which had so long been the source of public disorders and convulsions. They were sensible, that the people were extremely desirous of repose after so many bloody and destructive commotions; that both Yorkists and Lancastrians, who now lay equally under oppression, would embrace this scheme with ardor; and that the prospect of reconciling the two parties, which was in itself so desirable an end, would, when added to the general hatred against the present government, render their cause absolutely invincible. In consequence of these views, the prelate, by means of Reginald Bray, steward to the countess of Richmond, first opened the project of such an union to that lady; and the plan appeared so advantageous for her son, and, at the same time, so likely to succeed, that it admitted not of the least hesitation. Dr. Lewis, a Welsh physician, who had access to the queen-dowager in her sanctuary, carried the proposals to her; and found, that revenge for the murder of her brother and of her three sons, apprehensions for her surviving family, indignation against her confinement, easily overcame all her prejudices against the house of Lancaster, and procured her approbation of a marriage, to which the age and birth, as well as the present situation of the parties, seemed so naturally to invite them. She secretly borrowed a sum of money in the city, sent it over to the earl of Richmond, required his oath to celebrate the marriage as soon

C H A P.

XXIII.

1483.

C H A P. as he should arrive in England, advised him to
 XXIII. levy as many foreign forces as possible, and pro-
 1483. mised to join him, on his first appearance, with
 all the friends and partisans of her family.

THE plan being thus laid upon the solid foundations of good sense and sound policy, it was secretly communicated to the principal persons of both parties in all the counties of England; and a wonderful alacrity appeared in every order of men, to forward its success and completion. But it was impossible, that so extensive a conspiracy could be conducted in so secret a manner, as entirely to escape the jealous and vigilant eye of Richard; and he soon received intelligence, that his enemies, headed by the duke of Buckingham, were forming some design against his authority. He immediately put himself in a posture of defence by levying troops in the North; and he summoned the duke to appear at court, in such terms as seemed to promise him a renewal of their former amity. But that nobleman, well acquainted with the barbarity and treachery of Richard, replied only by taking arms in Wales, and giving the signal to his accomplices for a general insurrection in all parts of England. But at that very time there happened to fall such heavy rains, so incessant and continued, as exceeded any known in the memory of man; and the Severne, with the other rivers in that neighbourhood, swelled to a height which rendered them impassable, and prevented Buckingham from marching onto the heart of England to

October.

join his associates. The Welshmen, partly moved by superstition at this extraordinary event, partly distressed by famine in their camp, fell off from him; and Buckingham, finding himself deserted by his followers, put on a disguise, and took shelter in the house of Banister, an old servant of his family. But being detected in his retreat, he was brought to the king at Salisbury; and was instantly executed, according to the summary method practised in that age²⁰. The other conspirators, who took arms in four different places, at Exeter, at Salisbury, at Newbury, and at Maidstone, hearing of the duke of Buckingham's misfortunes, despaired of success, and immediately dispersed themselves.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1483.

Buckingham executed.

THE marquis of Dorset and the bishop of Ely made their escape beyond sea: Many others were equally fortunate: Several fell into Richard's hands, of whom he made some examples. His executions seem not to have been remarkably severe; though we are told of one gentleman, William Colingbourne, who suffered under color of this rebellion, but in reality for a distich of quibbling verses, which he had composed against Richard and his ministers²¹. The earl of Richmond, in concert with his friends, had set sail

²⁰ Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 568. ²¹ The lines were:

*The Rat, the Cat, and Lovel that Dog,
Rule all England under the Hog.*

Alluding to the names of Ratcliffe and Catesby and to Richard's arms, which were a boar.

C H A P. from St. Malo's, carrying on board a body of
XXIII. 5000 men, levied in foreign parts; but his fleet
being at first driven back by a storm, he ap-
peared not on the coast of England till after the
dispersion of all his friends; and he found himself
obliged to return to the court of Brittany.

1484.

23d of Jan.

THE king, every where triumphant, and forti-
fied by this unsuccessful attempt to dethrone him,
ventured at last to summon a parliament; a
measure which his crimes and flagrant usurpation
had induced him hitherto to decline. Though
it was natural, that the parliament, in a contest
of national parties, should always adhere to the
victor, he seems to have apprehended, lest his
title, founded on no principle, and supported by
no party, might be rejected by that assembly.
But his enemies being now at his feet, the par-
liament had no choice left but to recognize his
authority, and acknowledge his right to the
crown. His only son, Edward, then a youth of
twelve years of age, was created prince of Wales:
The duties of tonnage and poundage were
granted to the king for life: And Richard, in
order to reconcile the nation to his government,
passed some popular laws, particularly one against
the late practice of extorting money on pretence
of benevolence.

ALL the other measures of the king tended to
the same object. Sensible, that the only circum-
stance, which could give him security, was to
gain the confidence of the Yorkists, he paid
court to the queen-dowager with such art and

address, made such earnest protestations of his sincere good-will and friendship, that this princess, tired of confinement, and despairing of any success from her former projects, ventured to leave her sanctuary, and to put herself and her daughters into the hands of the tyrant. But he soon carried farther his views for the establishment of his throne. He had married Anne, the second daughter of the earl of Warwic, and widow of Edward prince of Wales, whom Richard himself had murdered; but this princess having born him but one son, who died about this time, he considered her as an invincible obstacle to the settlement of his fortune, and he was believed to have carried her off by poison; a crime for which the public could not be supposed to have any solid proof, but which the usual tenor of his conduct made it reasonable to suspect. He now thought it in his power to remove the chief perils, which threatened his government. The earl of Richmond, he knew, could never be formidable but from his projected marriage with the princess Elizabeth, the true heir of the crown; and he therefore intended, by means of a papal dispensation, to espouse, himself, this princess, and thus to unite in his own family their contending titles. The queen-dowager, eager to recover her lost authority, neither scrupled this alliance, which was very unusual in England, and was regarded as incestuous; nor felt any horror at marrying her daughter to the murderer of her three sons and of her brother: She even

C H A P.

XXIII.

1484.

C H A P. joined so far her interests with those of the
 XXIII. usurper, that she wrote to all her partisans, and
 1484. among the rest to her son, the marquis of Dorset,
 desiring them to withdraw from the earl of
 Richmond; an injury which the earl could never
 afterwards forgive: The court of Rome was
 applied to for a dispensation: Richard thought,
 that he could easily defend himself during the
 interval, till it arrived; and he had afterwards
 the agreeable prospect of a full and secure settle-
 ment. He flattered himself, that the English
 nation, seeing all danger removed of a disputed
 succession, would then acquiesce under the do-
 minion of a prince, who was of mature years,
 of great abilities, and of a genius qualified for
 government; and that they would forgive him all
 the crimes, which he had committed, in paving
 his way to the throne.

BUT the crimes of Richard were so horrid and
 so shocking to humanity, that the natural senti-
 ments of men, without any political or public
 views, were sufficient to render his government
 unstable; and every person of probity and honor
 was earnest to prevent the sceptre from being any
 longer polluted by that bloody and faithless hand
 which held it. All the exiles flocked to the earl
 of Richmond in Brittany, and exhorted him to
 hasten his attempt for a new invasion, and to
 prevent the marriage of the princess Elizabeth,
 which must prove fatal to all his hopes. The
 earl, sensible of the urgent necessity, but dreading
 the treachery of Peter Landais, who had entered

into a negociation with Richard for betraying him, was obliged to attend only to his present safety; and he made his escape to the court of France. The ministers of Charles VIII. who had now succeeded to the throne after the death of his father Lewis, gave him countenance and protection; and being desirous of raising disturbance to Richard, they secretly encouraged the earl in the levies, which he made for the support of his enterprize upon England. The earl of Oxford, whom Richard's suspicions had thrown into confinement, having made his escape, here joined Henry; and inflamed his ardor for the attempt, by the favorable accounts which he brought of the dispositions of the English nation, and their universal hatred of Richard's crimes and usurpation.

THE earl of Richmond set sail from Harfleur in Normandy with a small army of about 2000 men; and after a navigation of six days, he arrived at Milford-Haven in Wales, where he landed without opposition. He directed his course to that part of the kingdom, in hopes that the Welsh, who regarded him as their countryman, and who had been already prepossessed in favor of his cause by means of the duke of Buckingham, would join his standard, and enable him to make head against the established government. Richard, who knew not in what quarter he might expect the invader, had taken post at Nottingham, in the center of the kingdom; and having given commissions to different persons in the several

C H A P.
XXIII.

1485.
Invasion by
the earl of
Richmond.
7th August.

C H A P. counties, whom he empowered to oppose his
XXIII. enemy, he purposed in person to fly, on the first
1485. alarm, to the place exposed to danger. Sir Rice
ap Thomas and Sir Walter Herbert were intrusted
with his authority in Wales; but the former immediately deserted to Henry; the second made but feeble opposition to him: And the earl, advancing towards Shrewsbury, received every day some reinforcement from his partisans. Sir Gilbert Talbot joined him with all the vassals and retainers of the family of Shrewsbury: Sir Thomas Bouchier, and Sir Walter Hungerford, brought their friends to share his fortunes; and the appearance of men of distinction in his camp made already his cause wear a favorable aspect.

BUT the danger, to which Richard was chiefly exposed, proceeded not so much from the zeal of his open enemies, as from the infidelity of his pretended friends. Scarce any nobleman of distinction was sincerely attached to his cause, except the duke of Norfolk; and all those who feigned the most loyalty were only watching for an opportunity to betray and desert him. But the persons, of whom he entertained the greatest suspicion, were lord Stanley and his brother Sir William; whose connexions with the family of Richmond, notwithstanding their professions of attachment to his person, were never entirely forgotten or overlooked by him. When he empowered lord Stanley to levy forces, he still retained his eldest son, lord Strange, as a pledge for his fidelity; and that nobleman was, on this

account, obliged to employ great caution and reserve in his proceedings. He raised a powerful body of his friends and retainers in Cheshire and Lancashire, but without openly declaring himself: And though Henry had received secret assurances of his friendly intentions, the armies on both sides knew not what to infer from his equivocal behaviour. The two rivals, at last, approached each other, at Bosworth near Leicester; Henry at the head of six thousand men, Richard with an army of above double the number; and a decisive action was every hour expected between them. Stanley, who commanded above seven thousand men, took care to post himself at Atherstone, not far from the hostile camps; and he made such a disposition as enabled him on occasion to join either party. Richard had too much sagacity not to discover his intentions from these movements; but he kept the secret from his own men for fear of discouraging them: He took not immediate revenge on Stanley's son, as some of his courtiers advised him; because he hoped that so valuable a pledge would induce the father to prolong still farther his ambiguous conduct: And he hastened to decide by arms the quarrel with his competitor; being certain, that a victory over the earl of Richmond would enable him to take ample revenge on all his enemies, open and concealed.

THE van of Richmond's army, consisting of archers, was commanded by the earl of Oxford: Sir Gilbert Talbot led the right wing; Sir John

C H A P.
XXIII.
1485.

22d Aug.
Battle of
Bosworth.

C H A P. Savage the left: The earl himself, accompanied
 XXIII. by his uncle, the earl of Pembroke, placed him-
 1485. self in the main body. Richard also took post
 in *his* main body, and intrusted the command of
 his van to the duke of Norfolk: As his wings
 were never engaged, we have not learned the
 names of the several commanders. Soon after
 the battle began, lord Stanley, whose conduct
 in this whole affair discovers great precaution and
 abilities, appeared in the field, and declared for
 the earl of Richmond. This measure, which was
 unexpected to the men, though not to their
 leaders, had a proportional effect on both armies:
 It inspired unusual courage into Henry's soldiers;
 it threw Richard's into dismay and confusion.
 The intrepid tyrant, sensible of his desperate
 situation, cast his eye around the field, and de-
 crying his rival at no great distance, he drove
 against him with fury, in hopes, that either
 Henry's death or his own would decide the
 victory between them. He killed with his own
 hands Sir William Brandon, standard-bearer to
 the earl: He dismounted Sir John Cheyney: He
 was now within reach of Richmond himself,
 who declined not the combat; when Sir William
 Stanley, breaking in with his troops, surrounded
 Richard, who, fighting bravely to the last mo-
 ment, was overwhelmed by numbers, and
 perished by a fate too mild and honorable for
 his multiplied and detestable enormities. His men
 every where fought for safety by flight.

Death,

THERE fell in this battle about four thousand of the vanquished; and among these the duke of Norfolk, lord Ferrars of Charltey, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, Sir Robert Piercy, and Sir Robert Brackenbury. The loss was inconsiderable on the side of the victors. Sir William Catesby, a great instrument of Richard's crimes, was taken, and soon after beheaded, with some others, at Leicester. The body of Richard was found in the field, covered with dead enemies, and all besmeared with blood: It was thrown carelessly across a horse; was carried to Leicester amidst the shouts of the insulting spectators; and was interred in the Gray-Friars church of that place.

C H A P.
XXIII.
1485.

THE historians who favor Richard (for even this tyrant has met with partisans among the later writers) maintain, that he was well qualified for government, had he legally obtained it; and that he committed no crimes but such as were necessary to procure him possession of the crown: But this is a poor apology, when it is confessed, that he was ready to commit the most horrid crimes, which appeared necessary for that purpose; and it is certain, that all his courage and capacity, qualities in which he really seems not to have been deficient, would never have made compensation to the people for the danger of the precedent, and for the contagious example of vice and murder, exalted upon the throne. This prince was of a small stature, humpbacked, and had a harsh disagreeable countenance; so

and character
of Richard III.

C H A P. that his body was in every particular no less
XXIII. deformed than his mind.

* * * * *

THUS have we pursued the history of England through a series of many barbarous ages; till we have at last reached the dawn of civility and science, and have the prospect, both of greater certainty in our historical narrations, and of being able to present to the reader a spectacle more worthy of his attention. The want of certainty, however, and of circumstances, is not alike to be complained of throughout every period of this long narration. This island possesses many ancient historians of good credit; as well as many historical monuments; and it is rare, that the annals of so uncultivated a people, as were the English as well as the other European nations, after the decline of Roman learning, have been transmitted to posterity so complete, and with so little mixture of falsehood and of fable. This advantage we owe entirely to the clergy of the church of Rome; who, founding their authority on their superior knowledge, preserved the precious literature of antiquity from a total extinction²²; and under shelter of their numerous privileges and immunities, acquired a security, by means of the superstition, which they would in

²² See note (D) at the end of the volume.

vain have claimed, from the justice and humanity of those turbulent and licentious ages. Nor is the spectacle altogether unentertaining and uninstruc-
tive, which the history of those times presents to us. The view of human manners, in all their variety of appearances, is both profitable and agreeable; and if the aspect in some periods seem horrid and deformed, we may thence learn to cherish with the greater anxiety that science and civility, which has so close a connexion with virtue and humanity, and which, as it is a sovereign antidote against superstition, is also the most effectual remedy against vice and disorders of every kind.

THE rise, progress, perfection, and decline of art and science, are curious objects of contemplation, and intimately connected with a narration of civil transactions. The events of no particular period can be fully accounted for, but by considering the degrees of advancement, which men have reached in those particulars.

THOSE who cast their eye on the general revolutions of society, will find, that, as almost all improvements of the human mind had reached nearly to their state of perfection about the age of Augustus, there was a sensible decline from that point or period; and men thenceforth relapsed gradually into ignorance and barbarism. The unlimited extent of the Roman empire, and the consequent despotism of its monarchs, extinguished all emulation, debased the generous spirits of men, and depressed that noble flame,

C H A P. by which all the refined arts must be cherished
XXIII. and enlivened. The military government, which soon succeeded, rendered even the lives and properties of men insecure and precarious; and proved destructive to those vulgar and more necessary arts of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; and in the end, to the military art and genius itself, by which alone the immense fabric of the empire could be supported. The irruption of the barbarous nations, which soon followed, overwhelmed all human knowledge, which was already far in its decline; and men sunk every age deeper into ignorance, stupidity and superstition; till the light of ancient science and history had very nearly suffered a total extinction in all the European nations.

BUT there is a point of depression, as well as of exaltation, from which human affairs naturally return in a contrary direction, and beyond which they seldom pass either in their advancement or decline. The period, in which the people of Christendom were the lowest sunk in ignorance, and consequently in disorders of every kind, may justly be fixed at the eleventh century, about the age of William the Conqueror; and from that æra, the sun of science, beginning to re-ascend, threw out many gleams of light, which preceded the full morning, when letters were revived in the fifteenth century. The Danes and other northern people, who had so long infested all the coasts, and even the inland

parts of Europe, by their depredations, having now learned the arts of tillage and agriculture, found a certain subsistence at home, and were no longer tempted to desert their industry, in order to seek a precarious livelihood by rapine and by the plunder of their neighbours. The feudal governments also, among the more southern nations, were reduced to a kind of system; and though that strange species of civil policy was ill fitted to ensure either liberty or tranquillity, it was preferable to the universal licence and disorder, which had every where preceded it. But perhaps there was no event, which tended farther to the improvement of the age, than one, which has not been much remarked, the accidental finding of a copy of Justinian's Pandects, about the year 1130, in the town of Amalfi in Italy.

THE ecclesiastics, who had leisure, and some inclination to study, immediately adopted with zeal this excellent system of jurisprudence, and spread the knowledge of it throughout every part of Europe. Besides the intrinsic merit of the performance, it was recommended to them by its original connexion with the Imperial city of Rome, which, being the seat of their religion, seemed to acquire a new lustre and authority, by the diffusion of its laws over the western world. In less than ten years after the discovery of the Pandects, Vacarius, under the protection of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, read public lectures of civil law in the university of

C H A P. XXIII. Oxford; and the clergy every where, by their example as well as exhortation, were the means of diffusing the highest esteem for this new science. That order of men, having large possessions to defend, was, in a manner, necessitated to turn their studies towards the law; and their properties being often endangered by the violence of the princes and barons, it became their interest to enforce the observance of general and equitable rules, from which alone they could receive protection. As they possessed all the knowledge of the age, and were alone acquainted with the habits of thinking, the practice, as well as science of the law, fell mostly into their hands: And though the close connexion, which without any necessity they formed between the cannon and civil law, begat a jealousy in the laity of England, and prevented the Roman jurisprudence from becoming the municipal law of the country, as was the case in many states of Europe, a great part of it was secretly transferred into the practice of the courts of justice, and the imitation of their neighbours made the English gradually endeavour to raise their own law from its original state of rudeness and imperfection.

It is easy to see what advantages Europe must have reaped by its inheriting at once from the ancients, so complete an art, which was also so necessary for giving security to all other arts, and which, by refining, and still more, by bestowing solidity on the judgment, served as a model to farther improvements. The sensible utility of

the Roman law, both to public and private interest, recommended the study of it, at a time when the more exalted and speculative sciences carried no charms with them; and thus the last branch of ancient literature, which remained uncorrupted, was happily the first transmitted to the modern world. For it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philosophers were universally infected with superstition and sophistry, and the poets and historians with barbarism, the lawyers, who, in other countries, are seldom models of science or politeness, were yet able, by the constant study and close imitation of their predecessors, to maintain the same good sense in their decisions and reasonings, and the same purity in their language and expression.

WHAT bestowed an additional merit on the civil law, was the extreme imperfection of that jurisprudence, which preceded it among all the European nations, especially among the Saxons or ancient English. The absurdities which prevailed at that time in the administration of justice, may be conceived from the authentic monuments which remain of the ancient Saxon law; where a pecuniary commutation was received for every crime, where stated prices were fixed for men's lives and members, where private revenges were authorized for all injuries, where the use of the ordeal, corsnet, and afterwards of the duel, was the received method of proof, and where the judges were rustic freeholders, assembled of a sudden, and deciding a cause from one debate

C H A P. or altercation of the parties. Such a state of
 XXIII. society was very little advanced beyond the rude
 state of nature : Violence universally prevailed,
 instead of general and equitable maxims : The
 pretended liberty of the times, was only an
 incapacity of submitting to government : And
 men, not protected by law in their lives and
 properties, sought shelter, by their personal
 servitude and attachments, under some powerful
 chieftain, or by voluntary combinations.

THE gradual progress of improvement raised
 the Europeans somewhat above this uncultivated
 state; and affairs, in this island particularly, took
 early a turn, which was more favorable to
 justice and to liberty. Civil employments and
 occupations soon became honorable among the
 English : The situation of that people rendered
 not the perpetual attention to wars so necessary
 as among their neighbours, and all regard was
 not confined to the military profession : The
 gentry, and even the nobility, began to deem
 an acquaintance with the law a necessary part of
 education : They were less diverted than after-
 wards from studies of this kind by other sciences,
 and in the age of Henry VI. as we are told by
 Fortescue, there were in the inns of court about
 two thousand students, most of them men of
 honorable birth, who gave application to this
 branch of civil knowledge : A circumstance
 which proves, that a considerable progress was
 already made in the science of government, and
 which prognosticated a still greater.

ONE chief advantage, which resulted from the introduction and progress of the arts, was the introduction and progress of freedom; and this consequence affected men both in their *personal* and *civil* capacities. C H A P.
XXIII.

IF we consider the ancient state of Europe, we shall find, that the far greater part of the society were every where bereaved of their *personal* liberty, and lived entirely at the will of their masters. Every one, that was not noble, was a slave: The peasants were sold along with the land: The few inhabitants of cities were not in a better condition: Even the gentry themselves were subjected to a long train of subordination under the greater barons or chief vassals of the crown; who, though seemingly placed in a high state of splendor, yet, having but a slender protection from law, were exposed to every tempest of the state, and by the precarious condition in which they lived, paid dearly for the power of oppressing and tyrannising over their inferiors. The first incident, which broke in upon this violent system of government, was the practice, begun in Italy, and imitated in France, of erecting communities and corporations, endowed with privileges and a separate municipal government, which gave them protection against the tyranny of the Barons, and which the prince himself deemed it prudent to respect²³. The relaxation

²³ There appear early symptoms of the jealousy, entertained by the barons against the progress of the arts, as destructive of their licentious power. A law was enacted,

C H A P. of the feudal tenures, and an execution somewhat
XXIII. stricter, of the public law, bestowed an independence on vassals, which was unknown to their forefathers. And even the peasants themselves, though later than other orders of the state, made their escape from those bonds of villanage or slavery, in which they had formerly been retained.

It may appear strange, that the progress of the arts, which seems, among the Greeks and Romans, to have daily increased the number of slaves, should, in later times, have proved so general a source of liberty; but this difference in the events proceeded from a great difference in the circumstances, which attended those institutions. The ancient barons, obliged to maintain themselves continually in a military posture, and little emulous of elegance or splendor, employed not their villains as domestic servants, much less as manufacturers; but composed their retinue of free-men, whose military spirit rendered the chieftain formidable to his neighbours, and who

7 Henry IV. chap. 17. prohibiting any one who did not possess twenty shillings a year in land from binding his sons apprentices to any trade. They found already that the cities began to drain the country of the laborers and husbandmen; and did not foresee how much the increase of commerce would increase the value of their estates. See farther, Cotton. p. 179. The kings, to encourage the boroughs, granted them this privilege, that any villain, who had lived a twelvemonth in any corporation and had been of the guild, should be thenceforth regarded as free.

were ready to attend him in every warlike enterprife. The villains were entirely occupied in the cultivation of their master's land, and paid their rents either in corn and cattle and other produce of the farm, or in servile offices, which they performed about the baron's family, and upon the farms which he retained in his own possession. In proportion as agriculture improved, and money increased, it was found, that these services, though extremely burdensome to the villain, were of little advantage to the master; and that the produce of a large estate could be much more conveniently disposed of by the peasants themselves, who raised it, than by the landlord or his bailiff, who were formerly accustomed to receive it. A commutation was therefore made of rents for services, and of money-rents for those in kind; and as men, in a subsequent age, discovered, that farms were better cultivated where the farmer enjoyed a security in his possession, the practice of granting leases to the peasant began to prevail, which entirely broke the bonds of servitude, already much relaxed from the former practices. After this manner, villanage went gradually into disuse throughout the more civilized parts of Europe: The interest of the master, as well as that of the slave, concurred in this alteration. The latest laws which we find in England for enforcing or regulating this species of servitude, were enacted in the reign of Henry VII. And though the ancient statutes on this subject remain still

CHAP. unrepealed by parliament, it appears, that, before
XXIII. the end of Elizabeth, the distinction of villain and freeman was totally, though insensibly abolished, and that no person remained in the state, to whom the former laws could be applied.

THUS *personal* freedom became almost general in Europe; an advantage which paved the way for the increase of *political* or *civil* liberty, and which, even where it was not attended with this salutary effect, served to give the members of the community some of the most considerable advantages of it.

THE constitution of the English government, ever since the invasion of this island by the Saxons, may boast of this pre-eminence, that in no age the will of the monarch was ever entirely absolute and uncontroled: But in other respects the balance of power has extremely shifted among the several orders of the state; and this fabric has experienced the same mutability, that has attended all human institutions.

THE ancient Saxons, like the other German nations, where each individual was inured to arms, and where the independence of men was secured by a great equality of possessions, seem to have admitted a considerable mixture of democracy into their form of government, and to have been one of the freest nations, of which there remains any account in the records of history. After this tribe was settled in England, especially after the dissolution of the Heptarchy, the great extent of the kingdom produced a

great inequality in property; and the balance seems to have inclined to the side of aristocracy. The Norman conquest threw more authority into the hands of the sovereign, which, however, admitted of great controul; though derived less from the general forms of the constitution, which were inaccurate and irregular, than from the independent power enjoyed by each baron in his particular district or province. The establishment of the Great Charter exalted still higher the Aristocracy, imposed regular limits on royal power, and gradually introduced some mixture of Democracy into the constitution. But even during this period, from the accession of Edward I. to the death of Richard III. the condition of the commons was nowise eligible; a kind of Polish Aristocracy prevailed; and though the kings were limited, the people were as yet far from being free. It required the authority almost absolute of the sovereigns, which took place in the subsequent period, to pull down those disorderly and licentious tyrants, who were equally averse from peace and from freedom, and to establish that regular execution of the laws, which, in a following age, enabled the people to erect a regular and equitable plan of liberty.

IN each of these successive alterations, the only rule of government, which is intelligible or carries any authority with it, is the established practice of the age, and the maxims of administration, which are at that time prevalent, and

CHAPTER. universally assented to. Those who, from a
 XXIII. pretended respect to antiquity, appeal at every
 turn to an original plan of the constitution,
 only cover their turbulent spirit and their private
 ambition under the appearance of venerable
 forms, and whatever period they pitch on for
 their model, they may still be carried back to
 a more ancient period, where they will find the
 measures of power entirely different, and where
 every circumstance, by reason of the greater
 barbarity of the times, will appear still less
 worthy of imitation. Above all, a civilized
 nation, like the English, who have happily
 established the most perfect and most accurate
 system of liberty that was ever found compatible
 with government, ought to be cautious in
 appealing to the practice of their ancestors,
 or regarding the maxims of uncultivated ages
 as certain rules for their present conduct. An
 acquaintance with the ancient periods of their
 government is chiefly *useful* by instructing them
 to cherish their present constitution, from a
 comparison or contrast with the condition of
 those distant times. And it is also *curious*, by
 showing them the remote, and commonly faint
 and disfigured originals of the most finished
 and most noble institutions, and by instructing
 them in the great mixture of accident, which
 commonly concurs with a small ingredient of
 wisdom and foresight, in erecting the complicated
 fabric of the most perfect government.

C H A P. XXIV.

H E N R Y VII.

Accession of Henry VII.—His title to the crown—King's prejudice against the house of York—His joyful reception in London—His coronation—Sweating sickness—A parliament—Entail of the crown—King's marriage—An insurrection—Discontents of the people—Lambert Simnel—Revolt of Ireland—Intrigues of the dutchess of Burgundy—Lambert Simnel invades England—Battle of Stoke.

THE victory, which the earl of Richmond gained at Bosworth, was entirely decisive; being attended, as well with the total rout and dispersion of the royal army, as with the death of the king himself. Joy for this great success suddenly prompted the soldiers, in the field of battle, to bestow on their victorious general the appellation of king, which he had not hitherto assumed; and the acclamations of *Long live Henry the Seventh*, by a natural and unpremeditated movement, resounded from all quarters. To bestow some appearance of formality on this species of military election, Sir William Stanley brought a crown of ornament, which Richard wore in battle, and which had been found among the spoils; and he put it on the head of the victor. Henry himself remained not in suspense; but immediately,

C H A P.

XXIV.

1485.

August 22.

Accession of
Henry VII.

C H A P. without hesitation, accepted of the magnificent
 XXIV. present, which was tendered him. He was come
 1485. to the crisis of his fortune; and being obliged
 suddenly to determine himself, amidst great difficulties, which he must have frequently revolved in his mind, he chose that part, which his ambition suggested to him, and to which he seemed to be invited by his present success.

His title to
 the crown.

T H E R E were many titles, on which Henry could found his right to the crown; but no one of them free from great objections, if considered, with respect either to justice or to policy.

DURING some years, Henry had been regarded as heir to the house of Lancaster, by the party attached to that family; but the title of the house of Lancaster itself was generally thought to be very ill-founded, Henry IV, who had first raised it to royal dignity, had never clearly defined the foundation of his claim; and while he plainly invaded the order of succession, he had not acknowledged the election of the people. The parliament, it is true, had often recognized the title of the Lancastrian princes, but these votes had little authority, being considered as instances of complaisance towards a family in possession of present power: And they had accordingly been often reversed during the late prevalence of the house of York. Prudent men also, who had been willing, for the sake of peace, to submit to any established authority, desired not to see the claims of that family revived; claims, which must produce many convulsions at present, and

which disjointed for the future the whole system of hereditary right. Besides, allowing the title of the house of Lancaster to be legal, Henry himself was not the true heir of that family; and nothing but the obstinacy, natural to faction, which never, without reluctance, will submit to an antagonist, could have engaged the Lancastrians to adopt the earl of Richmond as their head. His mother indeed, Margaret, countess of Richmond, was sole daughter and heir of the duke of Somerset, sprung from John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster: But the descent of the Somerset line was itself illegitimate and even adulterous. And though the duke of Lancaster had obtained the legitimation of his natural children by a patent from Richard II. confirmed in parliament; it might justly be doubted, whether this deed could bestow any title to the crown; since in the patent itself all the privileges conferred by it are fully enumerated, and the succession to the kingdom is expressly excluded¹. In all settlements of the crown, made during the reigns of the Lancastrian princes, the line of Somerset had been entirely overlooked; and it was not till the failure of the legitimate branch, that men had paid any attention to their claim. And to add to the general dissatisfaction against Henry's title, his mother, from whom he derived all his right, was still alive; and evidently preceded him in the order of succession.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1485.

¹ Rymer, tom. vii. p. 849. Coke's Inst. 4 Inst. part I. p. 37.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1485.

THE title of the house of York, both from the plain reason of the case, and from the late popular government of Edward IV. had universally obtained the preference in the sentiments of the people; and Henry might ingraft his claim on the rights of that family, by his intended marriage with the princess Elizabeth, the heir of it; a marriage, which he had solemnly promised to celebrate, and to the expectation of which he had chiefly owed all his past successes. But many reasons dissuaded Henry from adopting this expedient. Were he to receive the crown only in right of his consort, his power, he knew, would be very limited; and he must expect rather to enjoy the bare title of king by a sort of courtesy, than possess the real authority which belongs to it. Should the princess die before him without issue, he must descend from the throne, and give place to the next in succession: And even if his bed should be blest with offspring, it seemed dangerous to expect, that filial piety in his children would prevail over the ambition of obtaining present possession of regal power. An act of parliament, indeed, might easily be procured to settle the crown on him during life; but Henry knew how much superior the claim of succession by blood was to the authority of an assembly², which had always been overborne by violence in the shock of contending titles, and which had ever been more governed by

² Bacon in Kennet's complete History, p. 579.

the conjunctures of the times, than by any consideration derived from reason or public interest.

C H A P.
XXIV.

1485.

THERE was yet a third foundation, on which Henry might rest his claim, the right of conquest, by his victory over Richard, the present possessor of the crown. But besides that Richard himself was deemed no better than an usurper, the army, which fought against him, consisted chiefly of Englishmen; and a right of conquest over England could never be established by such a victory. Nothing also would give greater umbrage to the nation than a claim of this nature; which might be construed as an abolition of all their rights and privileges, and the establishment of absolute authority in the sovereign³. William himself, the Norman, though at the head of a powerful and victorious army of foreigners, had at first declined the invidious title of conqueror; and it was not till the full establishment of his authority, that he had ventured to advance so violent and destructive a pretension.

BUT Henry was sensible, that there remained another foundation of power, somewhat resembling the right of conquest, namely, present possession; and that this title, guarded by vigor and abilities; would be sufficient to secure perpetual possession of the throne. He had before him the example of Henry IV. who, supported by no better pretension, had subdued many insurrections, and had been able to transmit the crown

³ Bacon, p. 579.

C H A P. XXIV. 1485. peaceably to his posterity. He could perceive, that this claim, which had been perpetuated through three generations of the family of Lancaster, might still have subsisted, notwithstanding the preferable title of the house of York, had not the sceptre devolved into the hands of Henry VI. which were too feeble to sustain it. Instructed by this recent experience, Henry was determined to put himself in possession of regal authority; and to show all opponents, that nothing but force of arms and a successful war should be able to expel him. His claim as heir to the house of Lancaster he was resolved to advance; and never allow to be discussed: And he hoped that this right, favored by the partisans of that family, and seconded by present power, would secure him a perpetual and an independent authority.

King's prejudice against the house of York.

THESE views of Henry are not exposed to much blame: because founded on good policy, and even on a species of necessity: But there entered into all his measures and counsels another motive, which admits not of the same apology. The violent contentions, which, during so long a period, had been maintained between the rival families, and the many sanguinary revenges, which they had alternately taken on each other, had inflamed the opposite factions to a high pitch of animosity. Henry himself, who had seen most of his near friends and relations perish in battle or by the executioner, and who had been exposed in his own person to many hardships and dangers,

had imbibed a violent antipathy to the York party, which no time or experience were ever able to efface. Instead of embracing the present happy opportunity of abolishing these fatal distinctions, of uniting his title with that of his consort, and of bestowing favor indiscriminately on the friends of both families; he carried to the throne all the partialities which belong to the head of a faction, and even the passions which are carefully guarded against by every true politician in that situation. To exalt the Lancastrian party, to depress the adherents of the house of York, were still the favorite objects of his pursuit: and through the whole course of his reign, he never forgot these early prepossessions. Incapable from his natural temper of a more enlarged and more benevolent system of policy, he exposed himself to many present inconveniences, by too anxiously guarding against that future possible event, which might disjoin his title from that of the princess whom he espoused. And while he treated the Yorkists as enemies, he soon rendered them such, and taught them to discuss that right to the crown, which he so carefully kept separate, and to perceive its weakness and invalidity.

To these passions of Henry, as well as to his suspicious politics, we are to ascribe the measures, which he embraced two days after the battle of Bosworth. Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwick, son of the duke of Clarence, was detained in a kind of confinement at Sherif-Hutton in Yorkshire,

C H A P. by the jealousy of his uncle, Richard; whose
 XXIV. title to the throne was inferior to that of the
 1485. young prince. Warwic had now reason to expect
 better treatment, as he was no obstacle to the
 succession either of Henry or Elizabeth; and from
 a youth of such tender years no danger could
 reasonably be apprehended. But Sir Robert
 Willoughby was dispatched by Henry with
 orders to take him from Sherif-Hutton, to convey
 him to the Tower, and to detain him in close
 custody *. The same messenger carried directions,
 that the princess Elizabeth, who had been
 confined to the same place, should be conducted
 to London, in order to meet Henry, and there
 celebrate her nuptials.

His joyful
 reception in
 London.

HENRY himself set out for the capital, and
 advanced by slow journies. Not to rouse the
 jealousy of the people, he took care to avoid all
 appearance of military triumph; and so to restrain
 the insolence of victory, that every thing about
 him bore the appearance of an established monarch,
 making a peaceable progress through his domi-
 nions, rather than of a prince who had opened
 his way to the throne by force of arms. The
 acclamations of the people were every where
 loud, and no less sincere and hearty. Besides that
 a young and victorious prince, on his accession,
 was naturally the object of popularity; the nation
 promised themselves great felicity from the new
 scene which opened before them. During the

* Bacon, p. 579. Polydore Virgil, p. 565.

course of near a whole century the kingdom had been laid waste by domestic wars and convulsions; and if at any time the noise of arms had ceased, the found of faction and discontent still threatened new disorders. Henry, by his marriage with Elizabeth, seemed to ensure a union of the contending titles of the two families; and having prevailed over a hated tyrant, who had anew disjointed the succession even of the house of York, and had filled his own family with blood and murder, he was, every where, attended with the unfeigned favor of the people. Numerous and splendid troops of gentry and nobility accompanied his progress. The mayor and companies of London received him as he approached the city: The crowds of people and citizens were zealous in their expressions of satisfaction. But Henry, amidst this general effusion of joy, discovered still the stateliness and reserve of his temper, which made him scorn to court popularity: He entered London in a close chariot, and would not gratify the people with a sight of their new sovereign.

BUT the king did not so much neglect the favor of the people, as to delay giving them assurances of his marriage with the princess Elizabeth, which he knew to be so passionately desired by the nation. On his leaving Brittany, he had artfully dropped some hints, that, if he should succeed in his enterprise, and obtain the crown of England, he would espouse Anne, the heir of that dutchy; and the report of this

C H A P engagement had already reached England, and
 XXIV. had begotten anxiety in the people, and even
 1485. in Elizabeth herself. Henry took care to dissipate
 these apprehensions, by solemnly renewing, before the council and principal nobility, the promise which he had already given to celebrate his nuptials with the English princess. But though bound by honor, as well as by interest, to complete this alliance, he was resolved to postpone it, till the ceremony of his own coronation should be finished, and till his title should be recognized by parliament. Still anxious to support his personal and hereditary right to the throne, he dreaded lest a preceding marriage with the princess should imply a participation of sovereignty in her, and raise doubts of his own title by the house of Lancaster.

His coronation.

Sweating sickness.

THERE raged at that time in London, and other parts of the kingdom, a species of malady, unknown to any other age or nation, the Sweating sickness, which occasioned the sudden death of great multitudes; though it seemed not to be propagated by any contagious infection, but arose from the general disposition of the air and of the human body. In less than twenty-four hours the patient commonly died or recovered; but when the pestilence had exerted its fury for a few weeks; it was observed, either from alterations in the air, or from a more proper regimen, which had been discovered, to be considerably abated^s. Preparations were then made for the

^s Polydore Virgil, p. 567.

ceremony of Henry's coronation. In order to heighten the splendor of that spectacle, he bestowed the rank of knight banneret on twelve persons; and he conferred peerages on three. Jasper earl of Pembroke, his uncle, was created duke of Bedford; Thomas lord Stanley, his father-in-law, earl of Derby; and Edward Courteney, earl of Devonshire. At the coronation likewise there appeared a new institution, which the king had established for security as well as pomp, a band of fifty archers, who were termed yeomen of the guard. But lest the people should take umbrage at this unusual symptom of jealousy in the prince, as if it implied a personal diffidence of his subjects, he declared the institution to be perpetual. The ceremony of coronation was performed by cardinal Bouchier, archbishop of Canterbury.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1485.

30 Octob^r

THE parliament being assembled at Westminster, the majority immediately appeared to be devoted partisans of Henry; all persons of another disposition, either declining to stand in those dangerous times, or being obliged to dissemble their principles and inclinations. The Lancastrian party had every where been successful in the elections; and even many had been returned, who, during the prevalence of the house of York, had been exposed to the rigor of law, and had been condemned by sentence of attainder and outlawry. Their right to take seats in the house being questioned, the case was referred to all the judges, who assembled in the Exchequer Chamber, in

7th Nov.
A parliament.

C H A P
XXIV
1485.

order to deliberate on so delicate a subject. The opinion delivered was prudent, and contained a just temperament between law and expediency⁶. The judges determined that the members attainted should forbear taking their seat till an act were passed for the reversal of their attainder. There was no difficulty in obtaining this act; and in it were comprehended a hundred and seven persons of the king's party⁷!

BUT a scruple was started of a nature still more important. The king himself had been attainted; and his right of succession to the crown might thence be exposed to some doubt. The judges extricated themselves from this dangerous question, by asserting it as a maxim; "That the crown takes away all defects and stops in blood; and that from the time the king assumed royal authority, the fountain was cleared, and all attainders and corruptions of blood discharged⁸." Besides that the case, from its urgent necessity, admitted of no deliberation; the judges probably thought, that no sentence of a court of judicature had authority sufficient to bar the right of succession; that the heir of the crown was commonly exposed to such jealousy as might often occasion stretches of law and justice against him; and that a prince might even be engaged in unjustifiable measures during his predecessor's reign, without meriting on that account to be excluded from the throne, which was his birthright.

⁶ Bacon, p. 581.
2, 3, 4—15. 17. 26—65.

⁷ Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. VII. n.
⁸ Bacon, p. 581.

WITH a parliament so obsequious, the king could not fail of obtaining whatever act of settlement he was pleased to require. He seems only to have entertained some doubt within himself on what claim he should found his pretensions. In his speech to the parliament he mentioned his just title by hereditary right: But lest that title should not be esteemed sufficient, he subjoined his claim by the judgment of God, who had given him victory over his enemies. And again, lest this pretension should be interpreted as assuming a right of conquest, he ensured to his subjects the full enjoyment of their former properties and possessions.

C H A P.

XXIV.

1485.]

THE entail of the crown was drawn, according to the sense of the king, and probably in words, dictated by him. He made no mention in it of the princess Elizabeth, nor of any branch of her family; but in other respects the act was compiled with sufficient reserve and moderation. He did not insist, that it should contain a declaration or recognition of his preceding right; as on the other hand, he avoided the appearance of a new law or ordinance. He chose a middle course, which, as is generally unavoidable in such cases, was not entirely free from uncertainty and obscurity. It was voted, "That the inheritance of the crown should rest, remain, and abide in the king;" but whether as rightful heir, or only as present possessor, was not determined. In like manner, Henry was

Entail of
the crown.

* Bacon, p. 581.

C H A P. contented that the succession should be secured
XXIV. to the heirs of his body ; but he pretended not,
1485. in case of their failure , to exclude the house of
York , or to give the preference to that of Lan-
caster : He left that great point ambiguous for the
present , and trusted , that , if it should ever be-
come requisite to determine it , future incidents
would open the way for the decision.

BUT even after all these precautions , the king
was so little satisfied with his own title , that ,
in the following year , he applied to papal au-
thority for a confirmation of it ; and as the court
of Rome gladly laid hold of all opportunities ,
which the imprudence , weakness , or necessities
of princes afforded it to extend its influence ,
Innocent VIII. the reigning pope , readily granted
a bull , in whatever terms the king was pleased
to desire. All Henry's titles , by succession ,
marriage , parliamentary choice , even conquest ,
are there enumerated ; and to the whole the
sanction of religion is added ; excommunication
is denounced against every one who should either
disturb him in the present possession , or the heirs
of his body in the future succession , of the crown ;
and from this penalty , no criminal , except in the
article of death , could be absolved but by the
pope himself , or his special commissioners. It is
difficult to imagine , that the security , derived
from this bull , could be a compensation for the
defect which it betrayed in Henry's title , and for
the danger of thus inviting the pope to interpose
in these concerns.

IT was natural, and even laudable in Henry to reverse the attainders, which had passed against the partisans of the house of Lancaster: But the revenges, which he exercised against the adherents of the York family, to which he was so soon to be allied, cannot be considered in the same light. Yet the parliament, at his instigation passed an act of attainder against the late king himself, against the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Surrey, viscount Lovel, the lords Zouche and Ferrars of Chartley, Sir Walter and Sir James Harrington, Sir William Berkeley, Sir Humphrey Stafford, Catesby, and about twenty other gentlemen, who had fought on Richard's side in the battle of Bosworth. How men could be guilty of treason, by supporting the king in possession against the earl of Richmond, who assumed not the title of king, it is not easy to conceive; and nothing but a fervile complaisance in the parliament could have engaged them to make this stretch of justice. Nor was it a small mortification to the people in general, to find, that the king, prompted either by avarice or resentment, could, in the very beginning of his reign, so far violate the cordial union, which had previously been concerted between the parties, and to the expectation of which he had plainly owed his succession to the throne.

THE king, having gained so many points of consequence from the parliament, thought it not expedient to demand any supply from them,

C H A P.

XXIV.

1485.

C H A P. which the profound peace enjoyed by the nation,
XXIV. and the late forfeiture of Richard's adherents,
1485. seemed to render somewhat superfluous. The
10th Dec. parliament, however, conferred on him during
life the duty of tonnage and poundage, which
had been enjoyed in the same manner by some of
his immediate predecessors; and they added,
before they broke up, other money bills of no
great moment. The king, on his part, made
returns of grace and favor to his people. He
published his royal proclamation, offering pardon
to all such as had taken arms, or formed any
attempts against him; provided they submitted
themselves to mercy by a certain day, and took
the usual oath of fealty and allegiance. Upon
this proclamation many came out of their sanctu-
aries; and the minds of men were every where
much quieted. Henry chose to take wholly to
himself the merit of an act of grace, so agreeable
to the nation; rather than communicate it with
the parliament, (as was his first intention) by
passing a bill to that purpose. The earl of Surrey,
however, though he had submitted, and delivered
himself into the king's hands, was sent prisoner
to the Tower.

DURING this parliament, the king also bestowed
favors and honors on some particular persons,
who were attached to him. Edward Stafford,
eldest son of the duke of Buckingham, attainted
in the late reign, was restored to the honors
of his family, as well as to its fortune, which
was very ample. This generosity, so unusual in

Henry, was the effect of his gratitude to the memory of Buckingham, who had first concerted the plan of his elevation, and who by his own ruin had made way for that great event. Chandos of Britanny was created earl of Bath, Sir Giles Daubeney lord Daubeney, and Sir Robert Willoughby lord Broke. These were all the titles of nobility conferred by the king during this session of parliament ¹⁰.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1485.

BUT the ministers, whom Henry most trusted and favored, were not chosen from among the nobility, or even from among the laity. John Morton, and Richard Fox, two clergymen, persons of industry, vigilance, and capacity, were the men to whom he chiefly confided his affairs and secret counsels. They had shared with him all his former dangers and distresses; and he now took care to make them participate in his good fortune. They were both called to the privy council; Morton was restored to the bishopric of Ely, Fox was created bishop of Exeter. The former soon after, upon the death of Bouchier, was raised to the see of Canterbury. The latter was made privy seal; and successively, bishop of Bath and Wells, Durham, and Winchester. For Henry, as lord Bacon observes, loved to employ and advance prelates; because, having rich bishoprics to bestow, it was easy for him to reward their services: And it was his maxim to raise them by slow steps, and make them first pass through the inferior sees ¹¹. He probably

¹⁰ Polydore Virgil, p. 566, ¹¹ Bacon, p. 582.

C H A P. expected, that, as they were naturally more
XXIV. dependent on him than the nobility, who, during that age, enjoyed possessions and jurisdictions dangerous to royal authority; so the prospect of farther elevation would render them still more active in his service, and more obsequious to his commands.

1486. In presenting the bill of tonnage and poundage,
18th Jan. the parliament, anxious to preserve the legal, undisputed succession to the crown, had petitioned Henry, with demonstrations of the greatest zeal, to espouse the princess Elizabeth; but they covered their true reason under the dutiful pretence of their desire to have heirs of his body.
King's marriage. He now thought in earnest of satisfying the minds of his people in that particular. His marriage was celebrated at London; and that with greater appearance of universal joy, than either his first entry or his coronation. Henry remarked with much displeasure this general favor borne to the house of York. The suspicions, which arose from it, not only disturbed his tranquillity during his whole reign; but bred disgust towards his consort herself, and poisoned all his domestic enjoyments. Though virtuous, amiable, and obsequious to the last degree, she never met with a proper return of affection, or even of complaisance from her husband; and the malignant ideas of faction still, in his fullen mind, prevailed over all the sentiments of conjugal tenderness.

THE king had been carried along, with such a tide of success, ever since his arrival in England,

that he thought nothing could withstand the fortune and authority which attended him. He now resolved to make a progress into the North, where the friends of the house of York, and even the partisans of Richard, were numerous; in hopes of curing, by his presence and conversation, the prejudices of the malecontents. When he arrived at Nottingham, he heard that viscount Lovel, with Sir Humphrey Stafford and Thomas, his brother, had secretly withdrawn themselves from their sanctuary at Colchester: But this news appeared not to him of such importance as to stop his journey; and he proceeded forward to York. He there heard, that the Staffords had levied an army, and were marching to besiege the city of Worcester: And that Lovel, at the head of three or four thousand men, was approaching to attack him in York. Henry was not dismayed with this intelligence. His active courage, full of resources, immediately prompted him to find the proper remedy. Though surrounded with enemies in these disaffected counties, he assembled a small body of troops, in whom he could confide; and he put them under the command of the duke of Bedford. He joined to them all his own attendants; but he found that this hasty armament was more formidable by their spirit and their zealous attachment to him, than by the arms or military stores with which they were provided. He therefore gave Bedford orders not to approach the enemy; but previously to try every proper expedient to disperse them. Bedford

C H A P.

XXIV.

1486.

An insur-
rection.

C H A P. published a general promise of pardon to the
 XXIV. rebels; which had a greater effect on their leader
 1486. than on his followers. Lovel, who had undertaken an enterprize, that exceeded his courage and capacity, was so terrified with the fear of desertion among his troops, that he suddenly withdrew himself; and, after lurking some time in Lancashire, he made his escape into Flanders, where he was protected by the dutchefs of Burgundy. His army submitted to the king's clemency; and the other rebels, hearing of this success, raised the siege of Worcester, and dispersed themselves. The Staffords took sanctuary in the church of Colnham, a village near Abingdon; but as it was found, that this church had not the privilege of giving protection to rebels, they were taken thence: The elder was executed at Tyburn; the younger, pleading that he had been misled by his brother, obtained a pardon¹².

20th Sept.

HENRY'S joy for this success was followed, some time after, by the birth of a prince, to whom he gave the name of Arthur, in memory of the famous British king of that name, from whom, it was pretended, the family of Tudor derived its descent.

Discontents
 of the people.

THOUGH Henry had been able to defeat this hasty rebellion, raised by the relics of Richard's partisans, his government was become in general unpopular: The source of public discontent arose chiefly from his prejudices against the house of

¹² Polydore Virgil, p. 569.

York, which was generally beloved by the nation, and which, for that very reason, became every day more the object of his hatred and jealousy. Not only a preference on all occasion, it was observed, was given to the Lancastrians; but many of the opposite party had been exposed to great severity, and had been bereaved of their fortunes by acts of attainder. A general resumption likewise had passed of all grants made by the princes of the house of York; and though this rigor had been covered under the pretence, that the revenue was become insufficient to support the dignity of the crown, and though the grants, during the later years of Henry VI. were resumed by the same law, yet the York party, as they were the principal sufferers by the resumption, thought it chiefly levelled against them. The severity, exercised against the earl of Warwick, begat compassion for youth and innocence, exposed to such oppression; and his confinement in the Tower, the very place where Edward's children had been murdered by their uncle, made the public expect a like catastrophe for him, and led them to make a comparison between Henry and that detested tyrant. And when it was remarked, that the queen herself met with harsh treatment, and even after the birth of a son, was not admitted to the honor of a public coronation, Henry's prepossessions were then concluded to be inveterate, and men became equally obstinate in their disgust to his government. Nor was the manner and address of the king

C H A P.

XXIV.

1486.

C H A P. calculated to cure these prejudices contracted against
XXIV. his administration; but had, in every thing, a
1486. tendency to promote fear, or at best reverence rather than goodwill and affection¹³. While the high idea, entertained of his policy and vigor, retained the nobility and men of character in obedience; the effects of his unpopular government soon appeared, by incidents of an extraordinary nature.

Lambert
 Simnel.

THERE lived in Oxford, one Richard Simon, a priest, who possessed some subtlety, and still more enterprise and temerity. This man had entertained the design of disturbing Henry's government, by raising a pretender to his crown; and for that purpose, he cast his eyes on Lambert Simnel, a youth of fifteen years of age, who was son of a baker, and who, being endowed with understanding above his years, and address above his condition, seemed well fitted to personate a prince of royal extraction. A report had been spread among the people, and received with great avidity, that Richard, duke of York, second son of Edward IV. had, by a secret escape, saved himself from the cruelty of his uncle, and lay somewhere concealed in England. Simon, taking advantage of this rumor, had at first instructed his pupil to assume that name, which he found to be so fondly cherished by the public: But hearing afterwards a new report, that Warwick had made his escape from the Tower, and

¹³ Bacon, p. 583.

observing that this news was attended with no less general satisfaction, he changed the plan of his imposture, and made Simnel personate that unfortunate prince¹⁴. Though the youth was qualified by nature for the part which he was instructed to act; yet was it remarked, that he was better informed in circumstances relating to the royal family, particularly in the adventures of the earl of Warwic, than he could be supposed to have learned from one of Simon's condition: And it was thence conjectured, that persons of higher rank, partisans of the house of York, had laid the plan of this conspiracy, and had conveyed proper instructions to the actors. The queen-dowager herself was exposed to suspicion; and it was indeed the general opinion, however unlikely it might seem, that she had secretly given her consent to the imposture. This woman was of a very restless disposition. Finding, that, instead of receiving the reward of her services, in contributing to Henry's elevation, she herself was fallen into absolute insignificance, her daughter treated with severity, and all her friends brought under subjection, she had conceived the most violent animosity against him, and had resolved to make him feel the effects of her resentment. She knew, that the impostor, however successful, might easily at last be set aside; and if a way could be found at his risque to subvert the government, she hoped that a scene might be

C H A P.
XXIV.
1486.

¹⁴ Polydore Virgil, p. 569, 570.

C H A P. opened, which, though difficult at present exactly
 XXIV. to foresee, would gratify her revenge, and be on
 1486. the whole less irksome to her, than that slavery
 and contempt, to which she was now reduced¹⁵.

BUT whatever care Simon might take to convey instruction to his pupil Simnel, he was sensible, that the imposture would not bear a close inspection; and he was therefore determined to open the first public scene of it in Ireland. That island, which was zealously attached to the house of York, and bore an affectionate regard to the memory of Clarence, Warwic's father, who had been their lieutenant, was improvidently allowed by Henry to remain in the same condition, in which he found it; and all the counsellors and officers, who had been appointed by his predecessor, still retained their authority. No sooner did Simnel present himself to Thomas Fitz-gerald, earl of Kildare, the deputy, and claim his protection as the unfortunate Warwic, than that credulous nobleman, not suspecting so bold an imposture, gave attention to him, and began to consult some persons of rank with regard to this extraordinary incident. These he found even more sanguine in their zeal and belief than himself: And in proportion as the story diffused itself among those of lower condition, it became the object of still greater passion and credulity, till the people in Dublin with one consent tendered their allegiance to Simnel, as to the true Plantagenet. Fond of a novelty,

¹⁵ Polydore Virgil, p. 570.

which flattered their natural propension, they overlooked the daughters of Edward IV. who stood before Warwic in the order of succession; they payed the pretended prince attendance as their sovereign, lodged him in the castle of Dublin, crowned him with a diadem taken from a statue of the virgin, and publicly proclaimed him king, by the appellation of Edward VI. The whole island followed the example of the capital; and not a sword was any where drawn in Henry's quarrel.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1486.
Revolt of
Ireland.

WHEN this intelligence was conveyed to the king, it reduced him to some perplexity. Determined always to face his enemies in person, he yet scrupled at present to leave England, where, he suspected, the conspiracy was first framed, and where, he knew, many persons of condition, and the people in general, were much disposed to give it countenance. In order to discover the secret source of the contrivance, and take measures against this open revolt, he held frequent consultations with his ministers and counsellors, and laid plans for a vigorous defence of his authority, and the suppression of his enemies.

THE first event, which followed these deliberations, gave surprise to the public: It was the seizure of the queen-dowager, the forfeiture of all her lands and revenue, and the close confinement of her person in the nunnery of Bermondesey. This act of authority was covered with a very thin pretence. It was alleged, that, notwithstanding the secret agreement to marry her daughter

CHAP. to Henry, she had yet yielded to the solicitations
 XXIV. and menaces of Richard, and had delivered that
 1485. princess and her sisters into the hands of the tyrant.
 This crime, which was now become obsolete,
 and might admit of alleviations, was therefore sus-
 pected not to be the real cause of the severity, with
 which she was treated; and men believed, that
 the king, unwilling to accuse so near a relation
 of a conspiracy against him, had cloaked his
 vengeance or precaution under color of an offence
 known to the whole world¹⁶. They were after-
 wards the more confirmed in this suspicion, when
 they found, that the unfortunate queen, though
 she survived this disgrace several years, was never
 treated with any more lenity, but was allowed
 to end her life in poverty, solitude, and con-
 finement.

THE next measure of the king's was of a less excep-
 tionable nature. He ordered that Warwic should be
 taken from the Tower, be led in procession through
 the streets of London, be conducted to St. Paul's,
 and there exposed to the view of the whole people.
 He even gave directions, that some men of rank,
 attached to the house of York, and best acquainted
 with the person of this prince, should approach
 him and converse with him: And he trusted, that
 these, being convinced of the absurd imposture
 of Simnel, would put a stop to the credulity of
 the populace. The expedient had its effect in
 England: But in Ireland the people still persisted

¹⁶ Bacon, p. 583. Polydore Virgil, p. 571.

in their revolt, and zealously retorted on the king the reproach of propagating an imposture, and of having shown a counterfeit Warwic to the public.

C H A P.
XXIV.
1486.

HENRY had soon reason to apprehend, that the design against him was not laid on such slight foundations as the absurdity of the contrivance seemed to indicate. John, earl of Lincoln, son of John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, and of Elisabeth, eldest sister to Edward IV. was engaged to take part in the conspiracy. This nobleman, who possessed capacity and courage, had entertained very aspiring views; and his ambition was encouraged by the known intentions of his uncle, Richard, who had formed a design, in case he himself should die without issue, of declaring Lincoln successor to the crown. The king's jealousy against all eminent persons of the York party, and his rigor towards Warwic, had farther struck Lincoln with apprehensions, and made him resolve to seek for safety in the most dangerous counsels. Having fixed a secret correspondence with Sir Thomas Broughton, a man of great interest in Lancashire, he retired to Flanders, where Lovel had arrived a little before him; and he lived, during some time, in the court of his aunt the dutchess of Burgundy, by whom he had been invited over.

MARGARET, widow of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, not having any children of her own, attached herself with an entire friendship to her daughter-in-law, married to Maximilian, archduke

Intrigues of
the dutchess
of Burgundy.

C H A P. of Austria; and after the death of that princess
 XXIV. she persevered in her affection to Philip and Margaret, her children, and occupied herself in the care of their education and of their persons. By her virtuous conduct and demeanour, she had acquired great authority among the Flemings; and lived with much dignity, as well as œconomy, upon that ample dowry, which she inherited from her husband. The resentments of this princess were no less warm than her friendships; and that spirit of faction, which it is so difficult for a social and sanguine temper to guard against, had taken strong possession of her heart, and intrenched somewhat on the probity, which shone forth in the other parts of her character. Hearing of the malignant jealousy, entertained by Henry against her family, and his oppression of all its partisans; she was moved with the highest indignation, and she determined to make him repent of that enmity, to which so many of her friends, without any reason or necessity, had fallen victims. After consulting with Lincoln and Lovel, she hired a
 1487. body of two thousand veteran Germans, under the command of Martin Swart, a brave and experienced officer¹⁷; and sent them over, together with these two noblemen, to join Simnel in Ireland. The countenance, given by persons of such high rank, and the accession of this military force, much raised the courage of the Irish, and made them entertain the resolution of invading England,

Lambert
 Simnel in-
 vades Eng-
 land.

¹⁷ Polyd. Virg. p. 572, 573.

where they believed the spirit of disaffection as prevalent as it appeared to be in Ireland. The poverty also, under which they labored, made it impossible for them to support any longer their new court and army, and inspired them with a strong desire of enriching themselves by plunder and preferment in England.

C H A P.

XXIV.

1487.

HENRY was not ignorant of these intentions of his enemies; and he prepared himself for defence. He ordered troops to be levied in different parts of the kingdom, and put them under the command of the duke of Bedford, and earl of Oxford. He confined the marquis of Dorset, who, he suspected, would resent the injuries suffered by his mother, the queen dowager: And to gratify the people by an appearance of devotion, he made a pilgrimage to our lady of Walsingham, famous for miracles; and there offered up prayers for success and for deliverance from his enemies.

BEING informed that Simnel was landed at Foudrey in Lancashire, he drew together his forces, and advanced towards the enemy as far as Coventry. The rebels had entertained hopes, that the disaffected counties in the North would rise in their favor: But the people in general, averse to join Irish and German invaders, convinced of Lambert's imposture, and kept in awe by the king's reputation for success and conduct, either remained in tranquillity, or gave assistance to the royal army. The earl of Lincoln, therefore, who commanded the rebels, finding no hopes but in victory, was determined to bring the

CHAP.

XXIV.

1487.

6th June.

Battle of
Stoke.

matter to a speedy decision; and the king, supported by the native courage of his temper, and emboldened by a great accession of volunteers, who had joined him, under the earl of Shrewsbury and lord Strange, declined not the combat. The hostile armies met at Stoke in the county of Nottingham, and fought a battle, which was bloody, and more obstinately disputed than could have been expected from the inequality of their force. All the leaders of the rebels were resolved to conquer or to perish; and they inspired their troops with like resolution. The Germans also, being veteran and experienced foldiers, kept the event long doubtful; and even the Irish, though ill-armed and almost defenceless, showed themselves not defective in spirit and bravery. The king's victory was purchased with loss, but was entirely decisive. Lincoln, Broughton, and Swart, perished in the field of battle, with four thousand of their followers. As Lovel was never more heard of, he was believed to have undergone the same fate. Simnel, with his tutor, Simon, was taken prisoner. Simon, being a priest, was not tried at law, and was only committed to close custody: Simnel was too contemptible to be an object either of apprehension or resentment to Henry. He was pardoned, and made a scullion in the king's kitchen; whence he was afterwards advanced to the rank of a falconer¹⁸.

¹⁸ Bacon, p. 586. Pol. Virg. p. 574.

HENRY had now leisure to revenge himself on his enemies. He made a progress into the northern parts, where he gave many proofs of his rigorous disposition. A strict inquiry was made after those who had assisted or favored the rebels. The punishments were not all sanguinary: The king made his revenge subservient to his avarice. Heavy fines were levied upon the delinquents. The proceedings of the courts, and even the courts themselves, were arbitrary. Either the criminals were tried by commissioners appointed for the purpose, or they suffered punishment by sentence of a court-martial. And as a rumor had prevailed before the battle of Stoke, that the rebels had gained the victory, that the royal army was cut in pieces, and that the king himself had escaped by flight, Henry was resolved to interpret the belief or propagation of this report as a mark of disaffection; and he punished many for that pretended crime. But such, in this age, was the situation of the English government, that the royal prerogative, which was but imperfectly restrained during the most peaceable periods, was sure, in tumultuous, or even suspicious times, which frequently recurred, to break all bounds of law, and to violate public liberty.

AFTER the king had gratified his rigor by the punishment of his enemies, he determined to give contentment to the people, in a point, which, though a mere ceremony, was passionately desired by them. The queen had been married near two years, but had not yet been crowned; and this

H A R.
XXIV.

1487.

C H A P. affectation of delay had given great discontent to
XXIV. the public, and had been one principal source of
1487. the disaffection which prevailed. The king, in-
25th Nov. structed by experience, now finished the ceremony
of her coronation; and to show a disposition still
more gracious, he restored to liberty the marquis
of Dorset, who had been able to clear himself of
all the suspicions entertained against him.

C H A P. XXV.

State of foreign affairs — State of Scotland — of Spain — of the Low Countries — of France — of Brittany — French invasion of Brittany — French embassy to England — Dissimulation of the French court — An insurrection in the North — suppressed — King sends forces into Brittany — Annexation of Brittany to France — A parliament — War with France — Invasion of France — Peace with France — Perkin Warbec — His imposture — He is avowed by the dutchess of Burgundy — and by many of the English nobility — Trial and execution of Stanley — A parliament.

THE king acquired great reputation throughout Europe by the vigorous and prosperous conduct of his domestic affairs: But as some incidents, about this time, invited him to look abroad, and exert himself in behalf of his allies, it will be necessary, in order to give a just account of his foreign measures, to explain the situation of the neighbouring kingdoms; beginning with Scotland, which lies most contiguous.

The kingdom of Scotland had not yet attained that state, which distinguishes a civilized monarchy, and which enables the government, by the force of its laws and institutions alone, without any extraordinary capacity in the sovereign, to maintain itself in order and tranquillity. James III. who now filled the throne, was a prince of little

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

State of foreign affairs.

State of Scotland.

C H A P. industry and of a narrow genius; and though it
 XXV. behoved him to yield the reins of government to
 1488. his ministers, he had never been able to make
 any choice, which could give contentment both
 to himself and to his people. When he bestowed
 his confidence on any of the principal nobility,
 he found, that they exalted their own family to
 such a height, as was dangerous to the prince,
 and gave umbrage to the state: When he con-
 ferred favor on any person of meaner birth, on
 whose submission he could more depend, the
 barons of his kingdom, enraged at the power of
 an upstart minion, proceeded to the utmost ex-
 tremities against their sovereign. Had Henry
 entertained the ambition of conquests, a tempting
 opportunity now offered of reducing that kingdom
 to subjection; but as he was probably sensible,
 that a warlike people, though they might be
 over-run by reason of their domestic divisions,
 could not be retained in obedience without a
 regular military force, which was then unknown
 in England, he rather intended the renewal of
 the peace with Scotland, and sent an embassy
 to James for that purpose. But the Scots, who
 never desired a durable peace with England, and
 who deemed their security to consist in constantly
 preserving themselves in a warlike posture, would
 not agree to more than a seven years truce,
 which was accordingly concluded¹.

THE European states on the continent were then

¹ Polyd. Virg. p. 575.

hastening fast to the situation , in which they have remained , without any material alteration , for near three centuries ; and began to unite themselves into one extensive system of policy , which comprehended the chief powers of Christendom. Spain , which had hitherto been almost entirely occupied within herself , now became formidable by the union of Arragon and Castile , in the persons of Ferdinand and Isabella , who , being princes of great capacity , employed their force in enterprizes the most advantageous to their combined monarchy. The conquest of Granada from the Moors was then undertaken , and brought near to a happy conclusion. And in that expedition the military genius of Spain was revived ; honor and security were attained ; and her princes , no longer kept in awe by a domestic enemy so dangerous , began to enter into all the transactions of Europe , and make a great figure in every war and negociation.

C H A P.
XXV.
1488.

State of
Spain.

MAXIMILIAN , king of the Romans , son of the emperor Frederic , had , by his marriage with the heiress of Burgundy , acquired an interest in the Netherlands ; and though the death of his consort had weakened his connexions with that country , he still pretended to the government as tutor to his son Philip , and his authority had been acknowledged by Brabant , Holland , and several of the provinces. But as Flanders and Hainault still refused to submit to his regency , and even appointed other tutors to Philip , he had been engaged in long wars against that obstinate people ,

Of the Low
Countries.

C H A P.
XXV.
1488.

and never was able thoroughly to subdue their spirit. That he might free himself from the opposition of France, he had concluded a peace with Lewis XI. and had given his daughter Margaret, then an infant, in marriage to the dauphin; together with Artois, Franche-Comté, and Charolois, as her dowry. But this alliance had not produced the desired effect. The dauphin succeeded to the crown of France by the appellation of Charles VIII. but Maximilian still found the mutinies of the Flemings fomented by the intrigues of the court of France.

State of
France.

FRANCE, during the two preceding reigns, had made a mighty increase in power and greatness; and had not other states of Europe at the same time received an accession of force, it had been impossible to have retained her within her ancient boundaries. Most of the great fiefs, Normandy, Champagne, Anjou, Dauphiny, Guienne, Provence, and Burgundy, had been united to the crown; the English had been expelled from all their conquests; the authority of the prince had been raised to such a height as enabled him to maintain law and order; a considerable military force was kept on foot, and the finances were able to support it. Lewis XI. indeed, from whom many of these advantages were derived, was dead, and had left his son, in early youth and ill educated, to sustain the weight of the monarchy: But having intrusted the government to his daughter, Anne, lady of Beaujeu, a woman of spirit and capacity, the French power suffered no check

check or decline. On the contrary, this princess formed the great project, which at last she happily effected, of uniting to the crown, Brittany, the last and most independent fief of the monarchy.

C H A P.
XXV.
1488.

FRANCIS II. duke of Brittany, conscious of his own incapacity for government, had resigned himself to the direction of Peter Landais, a man of mean birth, more remarkable for abilities than for virtue or integrity. The nobles of Brittany, displeased with the great advancement of this favorite, had even proceeded to disaffection against their sovereign; and after many tumults and disorders, they at last united among themselves, and in a violent manner seized, tried, and put to death the obnoxious minister. Dreading the resentment of the prince for this invasion of his authority, many of them retired to France; others, for protection and safety, maintained a secret correspondence with the French ministry, who, observing the great dissensions among the Bretons, thought the opportunity favorable for invading the dutchy; and so much the rather as they could cover their ambition under the specious pretence of providing for domestic security.

Of Brittany

LEWIS, duke of Orleans, first prince of the blood, and presumptive heir of the monarchy, had disputed the administration with the lady of Beaujeu; and though his pretensions had been rejected by the states, he still maintained cabals with many of the grandees, and laid schemes for subverting the authority of that princess. Finding his conspiracies detected, he took to arms,

C H A P. and fortified himself in Beaugenci; but as his
XXV. revolt was precipitate, before his confederates
1488. were ready to join him, he had been obliged to submit, and to receive such conditions as the French ministry were pleased to impose upon him. Actuated however by his ambition, and even by his fears, he soon retired out of France, and took shelter with the duke of Brittany, who was desirous of strengthening himself against the designs of the lady of Beaujeu by the friendship and credit of the duke of Orleans. This latter prince also, perceiving the ascendant which he soon acquired over the duke of Brittany, had engaged many of his partisans to join him at that court, and had formed the design of aggrandizing himself by a marriage with Anne, the heir of that opulent dutchy.

French invasion of
 Brittany.

THE barons of Brittany, who saw all favor engrossed by the duke of Orleans and his train, renewed a stricter correspondence with France, and even invited the French king to make an invasion on their country. Desirous however of preserving its independency, they had regulated the number of succours, which France was to send them, and had stipulated that no fortified place in Brittany should remain in the possession of that monarchy: A vain precaution, where revolted subjects treat with a power so much superior! The French invaded Brittany with forces three times more numerous than those which they had promised to the barons; and advancing into the heart of the country, laid siege to

Ploermel. To oppose them, the duke raised a numerous, but ill-disciplined army, which he put under the command of the duke of Orleans, the count of Dunois, and others of the French nobility. The army, discontented with this choice, and jealous of their confederates, soon disbanded, and left their prince with too small a force to keep the field against his invaders. He retired to Vannes; but being hotly pursued by the French, who had now made themselves masters of Ploermel, he escaped to Nantz; and the enemy, having previously taken and garrisoned Vannes, Dinant, and other places, laid close siege to that city. The barons of Brittany, finding their country menaced with total subjection, began gradually to withdraw from the French army, and to make peace with their sovereign.

THIS desertion, however, of the Bretons discouraged not the court of France from pursuing her favorite project of reducing Brittany to subjection. The situation of Europe appeared favorable to the execution of this design. Maximilian was indeed engaged in close alliance with the duke of Brittany, and had even opened a treaty for marrying his daughter; but he was on all occasions so indigent, and at that time so disquieted by the mutinies of the Flemings, that little effectual assistance could be expected from him. Ferdinand was entirely occupied in the conquest of Granada; and it was also known, that, if France would resign to him Roussillon and Cerdagne, to which he had pretensions, she

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

C H A P. could at any time engage him to abandon the
XXV. interests of Brittany. England alone was both
1488. enabled by her power, and engaged by her interests, to support the independence of that dutchy; and the most dangerous opposition was therefore, by Anne of Beaujeu, expected from that quarter. In order to cover her real designs, no sooner was she informed of Henry's success against Simnel and his partisans, than she dispatched ambassadors to the court of London, and made professions of the greatest trust and confidence in that monarch.

French embassy to England.

T H E ambassadors, after congratulating Henry on his late victory, and communicating to him, in the most cordial manner, as to an intimate friend, some successes of their master against Maximilian, came in the progress of their discourse to mention the late transactions in Brittany. They told him that the duke having given protection to French fugitives and rebels, the king had been necessitated; contrary to his intention and inclination, to carry war into that dutchy: That the honor of the crown was interested not to suffer a vassal so far to forget his duty to his liege lord; nor was the security of the government less concerned to prevent the consequences of this dangerous temerity: That the fugitives were no mean or obscure persons; but, among others, the duke of Orleans, first prince of the blood, who, finding himself obnoxious to justice for treasonable practices in France, had fled into Brittany; where he still persevered in laying schemes of rebellion against his sovereign: That

the war being thus, on the part of the French monarch, entirely defensive, it would immediately cease, when the duke of Brittany, by returning to his duty, should remove the causes of it: That their master was sensible of the obligations, which the duke, in very critical times, had conferred on Henry; but it was known also, that, in times still more critical, he or his mercenary counsellors had deserted him, and put his life in the utmost hazard: That his sole refuge in these desperate extremities had been the court of France, which not only protected his person, but supplied him with men and money, with which, aided by his own valor and conduct, he had been enabled to mount the throne of England: That France, in this transaction, had, from friendship to Henry, acted contrary to what, in a narrow view, might be esteemed her own interest; since, instead of an odious tyrant, she had contributed to establish on a rival throne a prince endowed with such virtue and abilities: And that as both the justice of the cause and the obligations conferred on Henry thus preponderated on the side of France, she reasonably expected, that, if the situation of his affairs did not permit him to give her assistance, he would at least preserve a neutrality between the contending parties ².

² Bacon, p. 589.

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

THIS discourse of the French ambassadors was plausible; and to give it greater weight, they communicated to Henry, as in confidence, their master's intention, after he should have settled the differences with Brittany, to lead an army into Italy, and make good his pretensions to the kingdom of Naples: A project, which, they knew, would give no umbrage to the court of England. But all these artifices were in vain employed against the penetration of the king. He clearly saw, that France had entertained the view of subduing Brittany; but he also perceived, that she would meet with great, and, as he thought, insuperable difficulties in the execution of her project. The native force of that dutchy, he knew, had always been considerable, and had often, without any foreign assistance, resisted the power of France; the natural temper of the French nation, he imagined, would make them easily abandon any enterprize, which required perseverance; and as the heir of the crown was confederated with the duke of Brittany, the ministers would be still more remiss in prosecuting a scheme, which must draw on them his resentment and displeasure. Should even these internal obstructions be removed, Maximilian, whose enmity to France was well known, and who now paid his addresses to the heiress of Brittany, would be able to make a diversion on the side of Flanders; nor could it be expected that France, if she prosecuted such ambitious projects, would be allowed to remain in tranquillity by Ferdinand

and Isabella. Above all, he thought, the French court could never expect, that England, so deeply interested to preserve the independence of Britanny, so able by her power and situation to give effectual and prompt assistance, would permit such an accession of force to her rival. He imagined, therefore, that the ministers of France, convinced of the impracticability of their scheme, would at last embrace pacific views, and would abandon an enterprize so obnoxious to all the potentates of Europe.

THIS reasoning of Henry was solid, and might justly engage him in dilatory and cautious measures: But there entered into his conduct another motive, which was apt to draw him beyond the just bounds, because founded on a ruling passion. His frugality, which by degrees degenerated into avarice, made him averse to all warlike enterprizes and distant expeditions, and engaged him previously to try the expedient of negociation. He dispatched Urswic, his almoner, a man of address and abilities, to make offer of his mediation to the contending parties: An offer, which, he thought, if accepted by France, would soon lead to a composure of all differences; if refused or eluded, would at least discover the perseverance of that court in her ambitious projects. Urswic found the lady of Beaujeu, now dutchess of Bourbon, engaged in the siege of Nantz, and had the satisfaction to find that his master's offer of mediation was readily embraced, and with many expressions of confidence and

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

Diffimula-
tion of the
French
court.

moderation. That able princess concluded, that the duke of Orleans, who governed the court of Brittany, foreseeing that every accommodation must be made at his expence, would use all his interest to have Henry's proposal rejected; and would by that means make an apology for the French measures, and draw on the Bretons the reproach of obstinacy and injustice. The event justified her prudence. When the English ambassador made the same offer to the duke of Brittany, he received for answer, in the name of that prince, that having so long acted the part of protector and guardian to Henry, during his youth and adverse fortune, he had expected, from a monarch of such virtue, more effectual assistance in his present distresses, than a barren offer of mediation, which suspended not the progress of the French arms: That if Henry's gratitude were not sufficient to engage him in such a measure, his prudence, as king of England, should discover to him the pernicious consequences attending the conquest of Brittany, and its annexation to the crown of France: That that kingdom, already too powerful, would be enabled, by so great an accession of force, to display, to the ruin of England, that hostile disposition, which had always subsisted between those rival nations: That Brittany, so useful an ally, which, by its situation, gave the English an entrance into the heart of France; being annexed to that kingdom, would be equally enabled from its situation to disturb, either by

piracies or naval armaments, the commerce and peace of England: And that, if the duke rejected Henry's mediation, it proceeded neither from an inclination to a war, which he experienced to be ruinous to him, nor from a confidence in his own force, which he knew to be much inferior to that of the enemy; but on the contrary, from a sense of his present necessities, which must engage the king to act the part of his confederate, not that of a mediator.

WHEN this answer was reported to the king, he abandoned not the plan which he had formed: He only concluded, that some more time was requisite to quell the obstinacy of the Bretons and make them submit to reason. And when he learned that the people of Brittany, anxious for their duke's safety, had formed a tumultuary army of 60,000 men, and had obliged the French to raise the siege of Nantz, he fortified himself the more in his opinion, that the court of France would at last be reduced, by multiplied obstacles and difficulties, to abandon the project of reducing Brittany to subjection. He continued therefore his scheme of negociation, and thereby exposed himself to be deceived by the artifices of the French ministry; who, still pretending pacific intentions, sent lord Bernard Daubigni, a Scotch man of quality, to London, and pressed Henry not to be discouraged in offering his mediation to the court of Brittany. The king on his part dispatched another embassy, consisting of Urswic, the abbot of Abingdon, and Sir Richard Tonstal,

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

H A P. who carried new propofals for an amicable treaty.
 XXV. No effectual succours, meanwhile, were provided
 1488. for the diftressed Bretons. Lord Woodville,
 brother to the queen dowager, having asked leave
 to raife underhand a body of volunteers and to
 transport them into Britanny, met with a refusal
 from the king, who was defirous of preferving
 the appearance of a ftrict neutrality. That
 nobleman, however, ftill perfifted in his purpofe.
 He went over to the Ifle of Wight, of which he
 was governor; levied a body of 400 men; and
 having at laft obtained, as is fupposed, the
 fecret permiffion of Henry, failed with them to
 Britanny. This enterprife proved fatal to the
 leader, and brought fmall relief to the unhappy
 duke. The Bretons rashly engaged in a general
 28th July. action with the French at St. Aubin, and were
 difcomfited. Woodville and all the Englifh were
 put to the fword; together with a body of Bretons,
 who had been accoutred in the garb of Englifh-
 men, in order to ftrike a greater terror into the
 French, to whom the martial prowefs of that
 nation was always formidable³. The duke of
 Orleans, the prince of Orange, and many other
 perfons of rank were taken prifoners: And the
 military force of Britanny was totally broken.
 9th Sept. The death of the duke, which followed foon
 after, threw affairs into ftill greater confufion,
 and feemed to threaten the ftate with a final
 fubjection.

³ Argentré Hift. de Bretagne, liv. xii.

THOUGH the king did not prepare against these events, so hurtful to the interests of England, with sufficient vigor and precaution, he had not altogether overlooked them. Determined to maintain a pacific conduct, as far as the situation of affairs would permit, he yet knew the warlike temper of his subjects, and observed, that their ancient and inveterate animosity to France was now revived by the prospect of this great accession to her power and grandeur. He resolved therefore to make advantage of this disposition, and draw some supplies from the people, on pretence of giving assistance to the duke of Brittany. He had summoned a parliament at Westminster⁴; and he soon persuaded them to grant him a considerable subsidy⁵. But this supply, though voted by parliament, involved the king in unexpected difficulties. The counties of Durham and York, always discontented with Henry's government, and farther provoked by the late oppressions, under which they had labored, after the suppression of Simnel's rebellion, resisted the commissioners who were appointed to levy the tax. The commissioners, terrified with this appearance of sedition, made application to the earl of Northumberland, and desired of him advice and assistance in the execution of their office. That nobleman thought

C H A P.

XXV.

1488.

An insurrection in the North.

⁴ 9th November, 1487. ⁵ Polydore Virgil, p. 579, says, that this imposition was a capitation tax; the other historians say, it was a tax of two shillings in the pound,

C H A P. the matter of importance enough to consult the
 XXV. king; who, unwilling to yield to the humors of
 1488. a discontented populace, and foreseeing the pernicious consequence of such a precedent, renewed his orders for strictly levying the imposition. Northumberland summoned together the justices and chief freeholders, and delivered the king's commands in the most imperious terms, which, he thought, would enforce obedience, but which tended only to provoke the people, and make them believe him the adviser of those orders which he delivered to them^e. They flew to arms, attacked Northumberland in his house, and put him to death. Having incurred such deep guilt, their mutinous humor prompted them to declare against the king himself; and being instigated by John Achamber, a seditious fellow of low birth, they chose Sir John Egremont their leader, and prepared themselves for a vigorous resistance. Henry was not dismayed with an insurrection so precipitate and ill-supported. He immediately levied a force which he put under the command of the earl of Surrey, whom he had freed from confinement, and received into favor. His intention was to send down these troops, in order to check the progress of the rebels; while he himself should follow with a greater body, which would absolutely ensure success. But Surrey thought himself strong enough to encounter alone a raw and unarmed multitude; and he succeeded in the attempt.

^e Bacon, p. 595.

The rebels were diffipated; John Achamber was taken prisoner, and afterwards executed with some of his accomplices; Sir John Egremond fled to the dutchefs of Burgundy, who gave him protection; the greater number of the rebels received a pardon.

C H A P.
XXV.
1488.
suppressed.

HENRY had probably expected, when he obtained this grant from parliament, that he should be able to terminate the affair of Brittany by negociation, and that he might thereby fill his coffers with the money levied by the imposition. But as the distresses of the Bretons still multiplied, and became every day more urgent; he found himself under the necessity of taking more vigorous measures, in order to support them. On the death of the duke, the French had revived some antiquated claims to the dominion of the dutchy; and as the duke of Orleans was now captive in France, their former pretence for hostilities could no longer serve as a cover to their ambition. The king resolved therefore to engage as auxiliary to Brittany; and to consult the interests, as well as desires of his people, by opposing himself to the progress of the French power. Besides entering into a league with Maximilian, and another with Ferdinand, which were distant resources, he levied a body of troops, to the number of 6000 men, with an intention of transporting them into Brittany. Still anxious, however, for the re-payment of his expences, he concluded a treaty with the young dutchefs, by which she engaged to deliver

C H A P. into his hands two sea-port towns, there to remain till she should entirely refund the charges of the armament⁷. Though he engaged for the service of these troops during the space of ten months only, yet was the dutchess obliged, by the necessity of her affairs, to submit to such rigid conditions, imposed by an ally, so much concerned in interest to protect her. The forces arrived under the command of lord Willoughby of Broke; and made the Bretons, during some time, masters of the field. The French retired into their garrisons; and expected by dilatory measures to waste the fire of the English, and disgust them with the enterprise. The scheme was well laid, and met with success. Lord Broke found such discord and confusion in the counsels of Brittany, that no measures could be concerted for any undertaking; no supply obtained; no provisions, carriages, artillery, or military stores procured. The whole court was rent into factions: No one minister had acquired the ascendant: And whatever project was formed by one, was sure to be traversed by another. The English, disconcerted in every enterprise, by these animosities and uncertain counsels, returned home as soon as the time of their service was elapsed; leaving only a small garrison in those towns which had been consigned into their hands. During their stay in Brittany, they had only contributed still farther to waste the country; and by their departure, they left it entirely at the mercy

XXV.

1489.

King sends
forces into
Britanny.

⁷ Du Tillet, Recueil des Traités.

of the enemy. So feeble was the succour, which Henry in this important conjuncture afforded his ally, whom the invasion of a foreign enemy, concurring with domestic dissensions, had reduced to the utmost distress.

THE great object of the domestic dissensions in Brittany was the disposal of the young dutchess in marriage. The marshal Rieux, favored by Henry, seconded the suit of the lord d'Albret, who led some forces to her assistance. The chancellor Montauban, observing the aversion of the dutchess to this suitor, insisted, that a petty prince, such as d'Albret, was unable to support Anne in her present extremities; and he recommended some more powerful alliance, particularly that of Maximilian, king of the Romans. This party at last prevailed; the marriage with Maximilian was celebrated by proxy; and the dutchess thenceforth assumed the title of queen of the Romans. But this magnificent appellation was all she gained by her marriage. Maximilian, destitute of troops and money, and embarrassed with the continual revolts of the Flemings, could send no succour to his distressed consort: While d'Albret, enraged at the preference given to his rival, deserted her cause, and received the French into Nantz, the most important place in the dutchy, both for strength and riches.

1499

THE French court now began to change their scheme with regard to the subjection of Brittany. Charles had formerly been affianced to Margaret daughter of Maximilian; who, though too

C H A P. XXV. 1490. young for the consummation of her marriage, had been sent to Paris to be educated, and at this time bore the title of queen of France. Besides the rich dowry, which she brought the king, she was, after her brother Philip, then in early youth, heir to all the dominions of the house of Burgundy; and seemed in many respects the most proper match, that could be chosen for the young monarch. These circumstances had so blinded both Maximilian and Henry, that they never suspected any other intentions in the French court, nor were they able to discover, that engagements, seemingly so advantageous and so solemnly entered into, could be infringed and set aside. But Charles began to perceive, that the conquest of Brittany, in opposition to the natives, and to all the great powers of Christendom, would prove a difficult enterprize; and that even, if he should over-run the country and make himself master of the fortresses, it would be impossible for him long to retain possession of them. The marriage alone of the dutchess could fully re-annex that fief to the crown; and the present and certain enjoyment of so considerable a territory seemed preferable to the prospect of inheriting the dominions of the house of Burgundy; a prospect which became every day more distant and precarious. Above all, the marriage of Maximilian and Anne, appeared destructive to the grandeur and even security of the French monarchy; while that prince, possessing Flanders on the one hand, and Brittany on the other, might thus, from both quarters,

make

make inroads into the heart of the country. C H A P.
 The only remedy for these evils was therefore XXV.
 concluded to be the dissolution of the two mar- 1490.
 riages, which had been celebrated, but not con-
 summated; and the espousal of the dutchess of
 Brittany by the king of France.

It was necessary, that this expedient, which
 had not been foreseen by any court in Europe,
 and which they were all so much interested to
 oppose, should be kept a profound secret, and
 should be discovered to the world only by the
 full execution of it. The measures of the French
 ministry in the conduct of this delicate enterprise
 were wise and political. While they pressed Bri-
 tanny with all the rigors of war, they secretly
 gained the count of Dunois, who possessed great
 authority with the Bretons; and having also
 engaged in their interests the prince of Orange,
 cousin-german to the dutchess, they gave him his
 liberty, and sent him into Brittany. These
 partisans, supported by other emissaries of France,
 prepared the minds of men for the great revolution
 projected and displayed, though still with many
 precautions, all the advantages of a union with
 the French monarchy. They represented to the
 barons of Brittany, that their country, harassed
 during so many years with perpetual war, had
 need of some repose, and of a solid and lasting
 peace with the only power that was formidable
 to them: That their alliance with Maximilian was
 not able to afford them even present protection;
 and by closely uniting them to a power, which

CHAP. was rival to the greatness of France, fixed them
 XXV. in perpetual enmity with that potent monarchy:
 That their vicinity exposed them first to the
 inroads of the enemy; and the happiest event,
 which, in such a situation, could befall them,
 would be to attain a peace, though by a final
 subjection to France, and by the loss of that
 liberty, transmitted to them from their ancestors:
 And that any other expedient, compatible with
 the honor of the state, and their duty to their
 sovereign, was preferable to a scene of such
 disorder and devastation.

THESE suggestions had influence with the
 Bretons: But the chief difficulty lay in surmount-
 ing the prejudices of the young dutchess herself.
 That princess had imbibed a strong prepossession
 against the French nation, particularly against
 Charles, the author of all the calamities, which
 from her earliest infancy, had befallen her family.
 She had also fixed her affections on Maximilian;
 and as she now deemed him her husband, she
 could not, she thought, without incurring the
 greatest guilt, and violating the most solemn
 engagements, contract a marriage with any other
 1491. person. In order to overcome her obstinacy,
 Charles gave the duke of Orleans his liberty,
 who, though formerly a suitor to the dutchess,
 was now contented to ingratiate himself with the
 king, by employing in his favor all the interest
 which he still possessed in Brittany. Marechal
 Rieux and chancellor Montauban were reconciled
 by his mediation; and these rival ministers now

concurred with the prince of Orange and the count of Dunois, in pressing the conclusion of a marriage with Charles. By their suggestion, Charles advanced with a powerful army and invested Rennes, at that time the residence of the dutchess; who, assailed on all hands, and finding none to support her in her inflexibility, at last opened the gates of the city, and agreed to espouse the king of France. She was married at Langey in Touraine; conducted to St. Denys, where she was crowned; thence made her entry into Paris, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, who regarded this marriage as the most prosperous event that could have befallen the monarchy.

C H A P.
XXV.
1491.

Annexation
of Brittany
to France.

THE triumph and success of Charles was the most sensible mortification to the king of the Romans. He had lost a considerable territory, which he thought he had acquired, and an accomplished princess whom he had espoused; he was affronted in the person of his daughter Margaret, who was sent back to him, after she had been treated during some years as queen of France, he had reason to reproach himself with his own supine security, in neglecting the consummation of his marriage, which was easily practicable for him, and which would have rendered the tie indissoluble: These considerations threw him into the most violent rage, which he vented in very indecent expressions; and he threatened France with an invasion from the united arms of Austria, Spain, and England.

THE king of England had also just reason to

C H A P. reproach himself with misconduct in this import-
 XXV. ant transaction; and though the affair had
 1491. terminated in a manner which he could not
 precisely foresee, his negligence, in leaving
 his most useful ally so long exposed to the
 invasion of superior power, could not but appear
 on reflection the result of timid caution and nar-
 row politics. As he valued himself on his extensive
 foresight and profound judgment, the ascendant
 acquired over him, by a raw youth, such as
 Charles, could not but give him the highest
 displeasure; and prompt him to seek vengeance,
 after "remedy for his miscarriage was become
 absolutely impracticable. But he was farther actu-
 ated by avarice, a motive still more predominant
 with him than either pride or revenge; and he
 sought, even from his present disappointments,
 the gratification of this ruling passion. On pretence
 of a French war, he issued a commission for levying
 a *Benevolence* on his people^{*}; a species of taxation,
 which had been abolished by a recent law of
 Richard III. This violence (for such it really
 was) fell chiefly on the commercial part of the
 nation, who were possessed of the ready money.
 London alone contributed to the amount of near
 10,000 pounds. Archbishop Morton, the chancellor,
 instructed the commissioners to employ a dilemma,
 in which every one might be comprehended:
 If the persons applied to, lived frugally, they
 were told, that their parsimony must necessarily

^{*} Rymer, vol. xi. p. 446. Bacon says that the benevolence
 was levied with consent of parliament, which is a mistake.

have enriched them: If their method of living were splendid and hospitable, they were concluded to be opulent on account of their expences. This device was by some called chancellor Morton's fork, by others his crutch.

H A P.
XXV.
1491.

So little apprehensive was the king of a parliament on account of his levying this arbitrary imposition, that he soon after summoned that assembly to meet at Westminster; and he even expected to enrich himself farther by working on their passions and prejudices. He knew the displeasure, which the English had conceived against France, on account of the acquisition of Brittany; and he took care to insist on that topic, in the speech, which he himself pronounced to the parliament. He told them, that France, elated with her late successes, had even proceeded to a contempt of England, and had refused to pay the tribute, which Lewis XI. had stipulated to Edward IV. That it became so warlike a nation as the English to be roused by this indignity, and not to limit their pretensions merely to repelling the present injury: That for his part, he was determined to lay claim to the crown itself of France and to maintain by force of arms so just a title, transmitted to him by his gallant ancestors: That Crecy, Poictiers, and Azincour were sufficient to instruct them in their superiority over the enemy; nor did he despair of adding new names to the glorious catalogue: That a king of France had been prisoner in London, and a king of England had been crowned at Paris; events which

27th Oct.

A parlia-
ment.

C H A P. XXV. 1491. should animate them to an emulation of like glory with that which had been enjoyed by their forefathers: That the domestic dissensions of England had been the sole cause of her losing these foreign dominions; and her present internal union would be the effectual means of recovering them: That where such lasting honor was in view, and such an important acquisition, it became not brave men to repine at the advance of a little treasure: And that for his part, he was determined to make the war maintain itself, and hoped by the invasion of so opulent a kingdom as France, to increase, rather than diminish, the riches of the nation⁹.

NOTWITHSTANDING these magnificent vaunts of the king, all men of penetration concluded, from the personal character of the man, and still more from the situation of affairs, that he had no serious intention of pushing the war to such extremities as he pretended. France was not now in the same condition as when such successful inroads had been made upon her by former kings of England. The great fiefs were united to the crown; the princes of the blood were desirous of tranquillity; the nation abounded with able captains and veteran soldiers; and the general aspect of her affairs seemed rather to threaten her neighbours, than to promise them any considerable advantages against her. The levity and vain-glory of Maximilian were supported by his pompous titles; but were ill seconded by military power, and still less, by any revenue, proportioned to them. The

⁹ Bacon, p. 601.

politic Ferdinand, while he made a show of war, C H A P.
XXV. was actually negotiating for peace; and rather than expose himself to any hazard, would accept of very moderate concessions from France. Even England was not free from domestic discontents; and in Scotland, the death of Henry's friend and ally, James III. who had been murdered by his rebellious subjects, had made way for the succession of his son, James IV. who was devoted to the French interest, and would surely be alarmed at any important progress of the English arms. But all these obvious considerations had no influence on the parliament. Inflamed by the ideas of subduing France, and of enriching themselves by the spoils of that kingdom, they gave into the snare prepared for them, and voted the supply which the king demanded. Two fifteenths were granted him; and the better to enable his vassals and nobility to attend him, an act was passed, empowering them to sell their estates, without paying any fines for alienation.

THE nobility were universally seized with a desire of military glory, and having credulously swallowed all the boasts of the king, they dreamed of no less than carrying their triumphant banners to the gates of Paris, and putting the crown of France on the head of their sovereign. Many of them borrowed large sums, or sold off manors, that they might appear in the field with greater splendor, and lead out their followers in more complete order. The king crossed the sea, and arrived at Calais on the sixth of October, with

1492.

6th Oct.
War with
France.

C H A P. an army of twenty - five thousand foot and sixteen
 XXV. hundred horse, which he put under the command
 1492. of the duke of Bedford and the earl of Oxford:
 But as some inferred, from his opening the cam-
 paign in so late a season, that peace would soon
 be concluded between the crowns, he was
 desirous of suggesting a contrary inference. " He
 " had come over," he said, " to make an entire
 " conquest of France, which was not the work
 " of one summer. It was therefore of no con-
 " sequence at what season he began the invasion;
 " especially as he had Calais ready for winter
 " quarters." As if he had seriously intended this
 enterprise, he instantly marched into the enemy's
 country and laid siege to Boulogne: But notwith-
 standing this appearance of hostility, there had
 been secret advances made towards peace above
 three months before; and commissioners had been
 appointed to treat of the terms. The better to
 reconcile the minds of men to this unexpected
 measure, the king's ambassadors arrived in the
 camp from the Low Countries, and informed
 him, that Maximilian was in no readiness to
 join him; nor was any assistance to be expected
 from that quarter. Soon after, messengers came
 from Spain, and brought news of a peace concluded
 between that kingdom and France, in which
 Charles had made a cession of the counties of
 Roussillon and Cerdagne to Ferdinand. Though
 these articles of intelligence were carefully dispersed
 throughout the army, the king was still appre-
 hensive, lest a sudden peace, after such magni-

Invasion of
 France.

ficent promises and high expectations, might expose him to reproach. In order the more effectually to cover the intended measures, he secretly engaged the marquis of Dorset, together with twenty-three persons of distinction, to present him a petition for agreeing to a treaty with France. The pretence was founded on the late season of the year, the difficulty of supplying the army at Calais during winter, the obstacles which arose in the siege of Boulogne, the desertion of those allies whose assistance had been most relied on: Events which might, all of them, have been foreseen before the embarkation of the forces.

IN consequence of these preparatory steps, the bishop of Exeter and lord Daubeney were sent to confer at Estaples with the mareschal de Cordes, and to put the last hand to the treaty. A few days sufficed for that purpose: The demands of Henry were wholly pecuniary; and the king of France, who deemed the peaceable possession of Brittany an equivalent for any sum, and who was all on fire for his projected expedition into Italy, readily agreed to the proposals made him. He engaged to pay Henry 745,000 crowns, near 400,000 pounds sterling of our present money; partly as a reimbursement of the sums advanced to Brittany, partly as arrears of the pension due to Edward IV. And he stipulated a yearly pension to Henry and his heirs of 25,000 crowns. Thus the king, as remarked by his historian, made profit upon his subjects for the war; and upon

C H A P.
XXV.
1492.

3d Nov.
Peace with
France.

CHAP. his enemies for the peace ^{1°}. And the people
 XXV. agreed, that he had fulfilled his promise, when
 1492. he said to the parliament, that he would make
 the war maintain itself. Maximilian was, if he
 pleased, comprehended in Henry's treaty; but he
 disdained to be in any respect beholden to an
 ally, of whom, he thought, he had reason to
 complain: He made a separate peace with France,
 and obtained restitution of Artois, Franche-comté,
 and Charolois, which had been ceded as the
 dowry of his daughter, when she was affianced
 to the king of France.

THE peace, concluded between England and
 France, was the more likely to continue, because
 Charles, full of ambition and youthful hopes,
 bent all his attention to the side of Italy, and
 soon after undertook the conquest of Naples;
 an enterprize which Henry regarded with the
 greater indifference, as Naples lay remote from
 him, and France had never, in any age; been
 successful in that quarter. The king's authority
 was fully established at home; and every rebellion,
 which had been attempted against him, had
 hitherto tended only to confound his enemies,
 and consolidate his power and influence. His
 reputation for policy and conduct was daily
 augmenting; his treasures had increased even
 from the most unfavorable events; the hopes
 of all pretenders to his throne were cut off, as
 well by his marriage, as by the issue which it

^{1°} Bacon, p. 605. Pol. Virg. p. 586.

had brought him. In this prosperous situation, the king had reason to flatter himself with the prospect of durable peace and tranquillity: But his inveterate and indefatigable enemies, whom he had wantonly provoked, raised him an adversary, who long kept him in inquietude, and sometimes even brought him into danger.

C H A P.

XXV.

1492.

THE dutchess of Burgundy, full of resentment for the depression of her family and its partisans, rather irritated than discouraged by the ill success of her past enterprises, was determined at last to disturb that government, which she found it so difficult to subvert. By means of her emissaries, she propagated a report, that her nephew, Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, had escaped from the Tower when his elder brother was murdered, and that he still lay somewhere concealed: And finding this rumor, however improbable, to be greedily received by the people, she had been looking out for some young man, proper to personate that unfortunate prince.

THERE was one Osbec, or Warbec, a renegado Jew of Tournay, who had been carried by some business to London in the reign of Edward IV. and had there a son born him. Having had opportunities of being known to the king, and obtaining his favor, he prevailed with that prince, whose manners were very affable, to stand godfather to his son, to whom he gave the name of Peter, corrupted, after the Flemish manner, into Peterkin, or Perkin. It was by

Perkin

Warbec

C H A P. some believed, that Edward, among his amorous
 XXV. adventures, had a secret commerce with War-
 1492. bec's wife; and people thence accounted for that
 resemblance, which was afterwards remarked
 between young Perkin and that monarch¹¹.
 Some years after the birth of this child, Warbec
 returned to Tournay; where Perkin, his son,
 did not long remain, but by different accidents
 was carried from place to place, and his birth
 and fortunes became thereby unknown, and
 difficult to be traced by the most diligent inquiry.
 The variety of his adventures had happily
 favored the natural versatility and sagacity of
 his genius; and he seemed to be a youth per-
 fectly fitted to act any part, or assume any
 character. In this light he had been represented
 to the dutchess of Burgundy, who, struck with
 the concurrence of so many circumstances suited
 to her purpose, desired to be made acquainted
 with the man, on whom she already began to
 ground her hopes of success. She found him to
 exceed her most sanguine expectations; so comely
 did he appear in his person, so graceful in his
 air, so courtly in his address, so full of docility
 and good sense in his behaviour and conversation.
 The lessons, necessary to be taught him, in order
 to his personating the duke of York, were
 soon learned by a youth of such quick apprehen-
 sion; but as the season seemed not then
 favorable for his enterprise, Margaret, in order

His impos-
ture.

¹¹ Bacon, p. 606.

the better to conceal him, sent him, under the care of lady Brampton, into Portugal, where he remained a year, unknown to all the world.

C H A P.
XXV.
1492.

THE war, which was then ready to break out between France and England, seemed to afford a proper opportunity for the discovery of this new phænomenon; and Ireland, which still retained its attachments to the house of York, was chosen as the proper place for his first appearance¹². He landed at Cork; and immediately assuming the name of Richard Plantagenet, drew to him partisans among that credulous people. He wrote letters to the earls of Desmond and Kildare, inviting them to join his party: He dispersed every where the strange intelligence of his escape from the cruelty of his uncle Richard: And men, fond of every thing new and wonderful, began to make him the general subject of their discourse, and even the object of their favor.

THE news soon reached France; and Charles, prompted by the secret solicitations of the dutchess of Burgundy, and the intrigues of one Frion, a secretary of Henry's who had deserted his service, sent Perkin an invitation to repair to him at Paris. He received him with all the marks of regard due to the duke of York; settled on him a handsome pension, assigned him magnificent lodgings, and in order to provide at once for his dignity and security,

¹² Polyd. Virg. p. 589.

C H A P. gave him a guard for his person, of which
 XXV. lord Congresal accepted the office of captain.
 1492. The French courtiers readily embraced a fiction,
 which their sovereign thought it his interest to ad-
 opt: Perkin, both by his deportment and personal
 qualities, supported the prepossession, which
 was spread abroad of his royal pedigree: And
 the whole kingdom was full of the accomplish-
 ments, as well as the singular adventures and
 misfortunes of the young Plantagenet. Wonders
 of this nature are commonly augmented at a
 distance. From France, the admiration and
 credulity diffused themselves into England: Sir
 George Nevil, Sir John Taylor, and above
 a hundred gentlemen more, came to Paris, in
 order to offer their services to the supposed duke
 of York, and to share his fortunes: And the
 impostor had now the appearance of a court
 attending him, and began to entertain hopes of
 final success in his undertakings.

He is avow-
 ed by the
 dutchess of
 Burgundy,

WHEN peace was concluded between France
 and England at Estaples, Henry applied to have
 Perkin put into his hands; but Charles, resolute
 not to betray a young man, of whatever
 birth, whom he had invited into his kingdom,
 would agree only to dismiss him. The pretend-
 ed Richard retired to the dutchess of Burgundy,
 and craving her protection and assistance,
 offered to lay before her all the proofs of that birth,
 to which he laid claim. This princess affected
 ignorance of his pretensions; even put on the
 appearance of distrust; and having, as she said,

been already deceived by Simnel, she was determined never again to be seduced by any impostor. She desired before all the world to be instructed in his reasons for assuming the name which he bore; seemed to examine every circumstance with the most scrupulous nicety; put many particular questions to him; affected astonishment at his answers; and at last, after long and severe scrutiny, burst out into joy and admiration at his wonderful deliverance, embraced him as her nephew, the true image of Edward, the sole heir of the Plantagenets, and the legitimate successor to the English throne. She immediately assigned him an equipage, suited to his pretended birth; appointed him a guard of thirty halberdiers; engaged every one to pay court to him; and on all occasions honored him with the appellation of the *White Rose of England*. The Flemings, moved by the authority which Margaret, both from her rank and personal character, enjoyed among them, readily adopted the fiction of Perkin's royal descent: No surmise of his true birth was as yet heard of: Little contradiction was made to the prevailing opinion: And the English, from their great communication with the Low Countries, were every day more and more prepossessed in favor of the impostor.

It was not the populace alone of England that gave credit to Perkin's pretensions. Men of the highest birth and quality, disgusted at Henry's government, by which they found the nobility

C H A P.

XXV.

1493.

and by many of the
English nobility.

depressed, began to turn their eyes towards the new claimant; and some of them even entered into a correspondence with him. Lord Fitzwater, Sir Simon Mountfort, Sir Thomas Thwaites betrayed their inclination towards him: Sir William Stanley himself, lord chamberlain, who had been so active in raising Henry to the throne, moved either by blind credulity or a restless ambition, entertained the project of a revolt in favor of his enemy¹³. Sir Robert Clifford and William Barley were still more open in their measures: They went over to Flanders, were introduced by the dutchess of Burgundy to the acquaintance of Perkin, and made him a tender of their services. Clifford wrote back to England, that he knew perfectly the person of Richard, duke of York, that this young man was undoubtedly that prince himself, and that no circumstance of his story was exposed to the least difficulty. Such positive intelligence, conveyed by a person of rank and character, was sufficient with many to put the matter beyond question, and excited the attention and wonder even of the most indifferent. The whole nation was held in suspense; a regular conspiracy was formed against the king's authority; and a correspondence settled between the malecontents in Flanders and those in England.

THE king was informed of all these particulars; but agreeably to his character, which was both cautious and resolute, he proceeded deliberately,

¹³ Bacon, p. 608.

though

though steadily, in counter-working the projects of his enemies. His first object was to ascertain the death of the real duke of York, and to confirm the opinion that had always prevailed with regard to that event. Five persons had been employed by Richard in the murder of his nephews, or could give evidence with regard to it; Sir James Tyrrel, to whom he had committed the government of the Tower for that purpose, and who had seen the dead princes; Forest, Dighton, and Slater, who perpetrated the crime; and the priest who buried the bodies. Tyrrel and Dighton alone were alive, and they agreed in the same story; but as the priest was dead, and as the bodies were supposed to have been removed by Richard's orders, from the place where they were first interred, and could not now be found, it was not in Henry's power to put the fact, so much as he wished, beyond all doubt and controversy.

He met at first with more difficulty, but was in the end more successful, in detecting who this wonderful person was that thus boldly advanced pretensions to his crown. He dispersed his spies all over Flanders and England; he engaged many to pretend that they had embraced Perkin's party; he directed them to insinuate themselves into the confidence of the young man's friends; in proportion as they conveyed intelligence of any conspirator, he bribed his retainers, his domestic servants, nay sometimes his confessor, and by these means traced up some other confederate;

C H A P. Clifford himself he engaged by the hope of rewards
XXV. and pardon, to betray the secrets committed to him; the more trust he gave to any of his spies, the higher resentment did he feign against them; some of them he even caused to be publicly anathematized, in order the better to procure them the confidence of his enemies: And in the issue, the whole plan of the conspiracy was clearly laid before him; and the pedigree, adventures, life, and conversation of the pretended duke of York. This latter part of the story was immediately published for the satisfaction of the nation: The conspirators he reserved for a slower and surer vengeance.

1494.

MEANWHILE, he remonstrated with the archduke, Philip, on account of the countenance and protection, which was afforded in his dominions to so infamous an impostor; contrary to treaties subsisting between the sovereigns, and to the mutual amity which had so long been maintained by the subjects of both states. Margaret had interest enough to get his application rejected; on pretence that Philip had no authority over the demesnes of the dutchess dowager. And the king, in resentment of this injury, cut off all commerce with the Low-Countries, banished the Flemings, and recalled his own subjects from these provinces. Philip retaliated by like edicts; but Henry knew, that so mutinous a people as the Flemings would not long bear, in compliance with the humors of their prince,

to be deprived of the beneficial branch of commerce which they carried on with England.

C H A P.

XXV.

1494.

He had it in his power to inflict more effectual punishment on his domestic enemies; and when his projects were sufficiently matured, he failed not to make them feel the effects of his resentment. Almost in the same instant, he arrested Fitzwater, Mountfort, and Thwaites, together with William Daubeney, Robert Ratcliff, Thomas Cressenor, and Thomas Astwood. All these were arraigned convicted, and condemned for high treason, in adhering and promising aid to Perkin. Mountfort, Ratcliff, and Daubeney were immediately executed: Fitzwater was sent over to Calais, and detained in custody; but being detected in practising on his keeper for an escape, he soon after underwent the same fate. The rest were pardoned, together with William Worsey, dean of St. Paul's, and some others, who had been accused and examined, but not brought to public trial¹⁴.

GREATER and more solemn preparations were deemed requisite for the trial of Stanley. Lord chamberlain, whose authority in the nation, whose domestic connexions with the king, as well as his former services, seemed to secure him against any accusation or punishment. Clifford was directed to come over privately to England, and to throw himself at the king's feet, while he sat in council; craving pardon for past offences, and offering to atone for them by any services,

¹⁴ Polydore Virgil, p. 592.

C H A P, which should be required of him. Henry then
 XXV. told him, that the best proof he could give of
 1494. penitence, and the only service he could now
 render him, was the full confession of his guilt,
 and the discovery of all his accomplices, however
 distinguished by rank or character. Encouraged
 by this exhortation, Clifford accused Stanley
 then present, as his chief abettor; and offered
 to lay before the council the full proof of his
 guilt. Stanley himself could not discover more
 surprise than was affected by Henry on the oc-
 casion. He received the intelligence as absolutely
 false and incredible; that a man, to whom he
 was in a great measure beholden for his crown,
 and even for his life; a man, to whom, by every
 honor and favor, he had endeavoured to ex-
 press his gratitude; whose brother, the earl of
 Derby, was his own father-in-law; to whom he
 had even committed the trust of his person, by
 creating him lord chamberlain: That this man,
 enjoying his full confidence and affection, not
 actuated by any motive of discontent or apprehen-
 sion, should engage in a conspiracy against him.
 Clifford was therefore exhorted to weigh well the
 consequences of his accusation; but as he persisted
 in the same positive asseverations, Stanley was
 committed to custody, and was soon after ex-
 amined before the council¹⁵. He denied not the
 guilt imputed to him by Clifford; he did not
 even endeavour much to extenuate it; whether

¹⁵ Bacon, p. 611. Polyd. Virg. p. 593.

he thought that a frank and open confession would serve as an atonement, or trusted to his present connexions, and his former services, for pardon and security. But princes are often apt to regard great services as a ground of jealousy, especially if accompanied with a craving and restless disposition, in the person who has performed them. The general discontent also, and mutinous humor of the people, seemed to require some great example of severity. And as Stanley was one of the most opulent subjects in the kingdom, being possessed of above three thousand pounds a-year in land, and forty thousand marks in plate and money, besides other property of great value, the prospect of so rich a forfeiture was deemed no small motive for Henry's proceeding to extremities against him. After six weeks delay, which was interposed in order to show that the king was restrained by doubts and scruples; the prisoner was brought to his trial, condemned, and presently after beheaded. Historians are not agreed with regard to the crime which was proved against him. The general report is, that he should have said in confidence to Clifford, that, if he were sure the young man, who appeared in Flanders, was really son to king Edward, he never would bear arms against him. The sentiment might disgust Henry, as implying a preference of the house of York to that of Lancaster, but could scarcely be the ground, even in those arbitrary times, of a sentence of high treason against Stanley. It is more probable, therefore, as is asserted by some historians, that

C H A P.
XXV.Trial and
execution of
Stanley.

1495.

15th Feb.

C H A P. he had exprefsly engaged to affist Perkin, and
XXV. had actually fent him fome fupply of money.

1498.

THE fate of Stanley made great impreffion on the kingdom, and ftruck all the partifans of Perkin with the deepeft difmay. From Clifford's defertion, they found that all their fecrets were betrayed; and as it appeared, that Stanley, while he feemed to live in the greateft confidence with the king, had been continually furrounded by fpies, who reported and registered every action in which he was engaged, nay, every word which fell from him, a general diftruff took place, and all mutual confidence was deftroyed, even among intimate friends and acquaintance. The jealous and fevere temper of the king, together with his great reputation for fagacity and penetration, kept men in awe, and quelled not only the movements of fedition, but the very murmurs of faction. Libels, however, creeped out againft Henry's perfon and adminiftration; and being greedily propagated by every fecret art, fhewed that there ftill remained among the people a confiderable root of difcontent, which wanted only a proper opportunity to difcover itfelf.

BUT Henry continued more intent on increafing the terrors of his people, than on gaining their affections. Truffing to the great fuccefs which attended him in all his enterprifes, he gave every day, more and more, a loofe to his rapacious temper, and employed the arts of perverted law and juftice, in order to exact fines and compofitions from his people. Sir William Capel, alder-

man of London, was condemned on some penal statutes to pay the sum of 2743 pounds, and was obliged to compound for sixteen hundred and fifteen. This was the first noted case of the kind; but it became a precedent, which prepared the way for many others. The management, indeed, of these arts of chicanery, was the great secret of the king's administration. While he depressed the nobility, he exalted and honored and caressed the lawyers; and by that means both bestowed authority on the laws, and was enabled, whenever he pleased, to pervert them to his own advantage. His government was oppressive; but it was so much the less burthensome, as, by his extending royal authority, and curbing the nobles, he became in reality the sole oppressor in his kingdom.

As Perkin found, that the king's authority daily gained ground among the people, and that his own pretensions were becoming obsolete, he resolved to attempt something, which might revive the hopes and expectations of his partisans. Having collected a band of outlaws, pirates, robbers, and necessitous persons of all nations, to the number of 600 men, he put to sea, with a resolution of making a descent in England, and of exciting the common people to arms, since all his correspondence with the nobility was cut off by Henry's vigilance and severity. Information being brought him, that the king had made a progress to the north, he cast anchor on the coast of Kent, and sent some of his retainers ashore,

C H A P. XXV. 1495. who invited the country to join him. The gentlemen of Kent assembled some troops to oppose him; but they purposed to do more essential service than by repelling the invasion: They carried the semblance of friendship to Perkin, and invited him to come, himself, ashore, in order to take the command over them. But the wary youth, observing that they had more order and regularity in their movements than could be supposed in new levied forces, who had taken arms against established authority, refused to intrust himself into their hands; and the Kentish troops, despairing of success in their stratagem, fell upon such of his retainers, as were already landed; and besides some whom they slew, they took a hundred and fifty prisoners. These were tried and condemned; and all of them executed, by orders from the king, who was resolved to use no lenity towards men of such desperate fortunes ¹⁶.

A parliament.

THIS year a parliament was summoned in England, another in Ireland; and some remarkable laws were passed in both countries. The English parliament enacted, that no person, who should by arms or otherwise assist the king for the time being, should ever afterwards, either by course of law or act of parliament, be attainted for such an instance of obedience. This statute might be exposed to some censure, as favorable to usurpers; were there any precise rule, which always, even

¹⁶ Polydore Virgil, p. 595.

during the most factious times, could determine the true successor, and render every one inexcusable, who did not submit to him. But as the titles of princes are then the great subject of dispute; and each party pleads topics in its own favor, it seems but equitable to secure those who act in support of public tranquillity, an object at all times of undoubted benefit and importance. Henry, conscious of his disputed title, promoted this law, in order to secure his partisans against all events; but as he had himself observed a contrary practice with regard to Richard's adherents, he had reason to apprehend, that, during the violence which usually ensues on public convulsions, his example, rather than his law, would, in case of a new revolution, be followed by his enemies. And the attempt to bind the legislature itself, by prescribing rules to future parliaments, was contradictory to the plainest principles of political government.

THIS parliament also passed an act, empowering the king to levy, by course of law, all the sums which any person had agreed to pay by way of benevolence: A statute, by which that arbitrary method of taxation was indirectly authorised and justified.

THE king's authority appeared equally prevalent and uncontrouled in Ireland. Sir Edward Poynings had been sent over to that country, with an intention of quelling the partisans of the house of York, and of reducing the natives to subjection. He was not supported by forces sufficient for that enterprize: The Irish, by flying into their woods,

C H A P.

XXV.

1495.

C H A P. and morasses, and mountains, for some time eluded
 XXV. his efforts : But Poynings summoned a parliament
 1495. at Dublin, where he was more successful. He
 passed that memorable statute, which still bears
 his name, and which establishes the authority of
 the English government in Ireland. By this statute
 all the former laws of England were made to be
 of force in Ireland; and no bill can be introduced
 into the Irish parliament, unless it previously
 receive the sanction of the council of England.
 This latter clause seems calculated for ensuring the
 dominion of the English; but was really granted
 at the desire of the Irish commons, who intended,
 by that means, to secure themselves from the
 tyranny of their lords, particularly of such lieutenants or deputies as were of Irish birth¹⁷.

WHILE Henry's authority was thus established throughout his dominions, and general tranquillity prevailed, the whole continent was thrown into combustion by the French invasion of Italy, and by the rapid success which attended Charles in that rash and ill-concerted enterprise. The Italians, who had entirely lost the use of arms, and who, in the midst of continual wars, had become every day more unwarlike, were astonished to meet an enemy, that made the field of battle, not a pompous tournament, but a scene of blood, and fought at the hazard of their own lives the death of their enemy. Their effeminate troops were dispersed every where on the approach of the

¹⁷ Sir John Davis, p. 235.

C H A P.

XXV.

1495.

French army: Their best fortified cities opened their gates: Kingdoms and states were in an instant overturned: And through the whole length of Italy, which the French penetrated without resistance, they seemed rather to be taking quarters in their own country, than making conquests over an enemy. The maxims, which the Italians, during that age, followed in negociations, were as ill calculated to support their states, as the habits to which they were addicted in war: A treacherous, deceitful, and inconsistent system of politics prevailed; and even those small remains of fidelity and honor, which were preserved in the councils of the other European princes, were ridiculed in Italy, as proofs of ignorance and rusticity. Ludovico, duke of Milan, who invited the French to invade Naples, had never desired or expected their success; and was the first that felt terror from the prosperous issue of those projects, which he himself had concerted. By his intrigues a league was formed among several potentates to oppose the progress of Charles's conquests and secure their own independency. This league was composed of Ludovico himself, the pope, Maximilian king of the Romans, Ferdinand of Spain, and the republic of Venice. Henry too entered into the confederacy; but was not put to any expence or trouble in consequence of his engagements. The king of France, terrified by so powerful a combination, retired from Naples with the greater part of his army, and returned to France. The forces, which he left

C H A P. in his new conquest were, partly by the revolt
XXV. of the inhabitants, partly by the invasion of the
1495. Spaniards, soon after subdued; and the whole
kingdom of Naples suddenly returned to its alle-
giance under Ferdinand, son to Alphonso, who
had been suddenly expelled by the irruption of
the French. Ferdinand died soon after; and left
his uncle, Frederic, in full possession of the throne.

C H A P. XXVI.

Perkin retires to Scotland — Insurrection in the west — Battle of Blackheath — Truce with Scotland — Perkin taken prisoner — Perkin executed — The earl of Warwic executed — Marriage of prince Arthur with Catharine of Arragon — His death — Marriage of the princess Margaret with the king of Scotland — Oppressions of the people — A parliament — Arrival of the king of Castile — Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk — Sickness of the king — His death — and character — His laws.

AFTER Perkin was repulsed from the coast of Kent, he retired into Flanders; but as he found it impossible to procure subsistence for himself and his followers, while he remained in tranquillity, he soon after made an attempt upon Ireland, which had always appeared forward to join every invader of Henry's authority. But Poynings had now put the affairs of that island in so good a posture, that Perkin met with little success; and being tired of the savage life, which he was obliged to lead, while skulking among the wild Irish, he bent his course towards Scotland, and presented himself to James IV. who then governed that kingdom. He had been previously recommended to this prince by the king of France, who was disgusted at Henry for entering into the

C H A P.
XXVI.
1495.

C H A P. general league against him; and this recommend-
XXVI. ation was even seconded by Maximilian, who, though one of the confederates, was also displeased with the king, on account of his prohibiting in England all commerce with the Low Countries. The countenance given to Perkin by these princes procured him a favorable reception with the king of Scotland, who assured him, that, whatever he were, he never should repent putting himself in his hands¹: The insinuating address and plausible behaviour of the youth himself, seem even to have gained him credit and authority. James, whom years had not yet taught distrust or caution, was seduced to believe the story of Perkin's birth and adventures; and he carried his confidence so far as to give him in marriage the lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, and related to himself; a young lady too, eminent for virtue as well as beauty.

Perkin re-
tires to
Scotland.

1496. THERE subsisted at that time a great jealousy between the courts of England and Scotland; and James was probably the more forward on that account to adopt any fiction, which, he thought, might reduce his enemy to distress or difficulty. He suddenly resolved to make an inroad into England, attended by some of the borderers; and he carried Perkin along with him, in hopes, that the appearance of the pretended prince might raise an insurrection in the northern

¹ Bacon, p. 615. Polydore Virgil, p. 596, 597.

counties. Perkin himself dispersed a manifesto, in which he set forth his own story, and craved the assistance of all his subjects in expelling the usurper, whose tyranny and mal-administration, whose depression of the nobility by the elevation of mean persons, whose oppression of the people by multiplied impositions and vexations, had justly, he said, rendered him odious to all men. But Perkin's pretensions, attended with repeated disappointments, were now become stale in the eyes even of the populace; and the hostile dispositions, which subsisted between the kingdoms, rendered a prince, supported by the Scots, but an unwelcome present to the English nation. The ravages also, committed by the borderers, accustomed to licence and disorder struck a terror into all men; and made the people prepare rather for repelling the invaders than for joining them. Perkin, that he might support his pretensions to royal birth, feigned great compassion for the misery of his plundered subjects; and publicly remonstrated with his ally against the depredations exercised by the Scottish army²: But James told him, that he doubted his concern was employed only in behalf of an enemy, and that he was anxious to preserve what never should belong to him. That prince now began to perceive, that his attempt would be fruitless; and hearing of an army, which was on its march to attack him, he thought proper to retreat into his own country.

C H A P.

XXVI.

1496.

² Polydore Virgil, p. 598.

E H A P. THE king discovered little anxiety to procure
 XXVI. either reparation or vengeance for this insult
 committed on him by the Scottish nation: His
 chief concern was to draw advantage from it,
 by the pretence which it might afford him to
 levy impositions on his own subjects. He sum-
 moned a parliament, to whom he made bitter
 complaints against the irruption of the Scots, the
 absurd imposture countenanced by that nation,
 the cruel devastations committed in the northern
 counties, and the multiplied insults thus offered
 both to the king and kingdom of England. The
 parliament made the expected return to this dis-
 course, by granting a subsidy to the amount of
 120,000 pounds, together with two fifteenths.
 After making this grant, they were dismissed.

1497. THE vote of parliament for imposing the tax
 was without much difficulty procured by the
 authority of Henry; but he found it not so easy
 to levy the money upon his subjects. The people,
 who were acquainted with the immense treasures
 which he had amassed, could ill brook the new
 impositions raised on every slight occasion; and
 it is probable, that the flaw, which was univer-
 sally known to be in his title, made his reign
 the more subject to insurrections and rebellions.

Insurrection When the subsidy began to be levied in Cornwall,
 in the West. the inhabitants, numerous and poor, robust and
 courageous, murmured against a tax, occasioned
 by a sudden inroad of the Scots, from which
 they esteemed themselves entirely secure, and
 which had usually been repelled by the force of
 the

the northern counties. Their ill-humor was farther incited by one Michael Joseph, a farrier of Bodmin, a notable prating fellow, who, by thrusting himself forward on every occasion, and being loudest in every complaint against the government, had acquired an authority among those rude people. Thomas Flammoc too, a lawyer, who had become the oracle of the neighbourhood, encouraged the sedition, by informing them, that the tax, though imposed by parliament, was entirely illegal; that the northern nobility were bound, by their tenures, to defend the nation against the Scots; and that if these new impositions were tamely submitted to, the avarice of Henry and of his ministers would soon render the burden intolerable to the nation. The Cornish, he said, must deliver to the king a petition, seconded by such a force as would give it authority; and in order to procure the concurrence of the rest of the kingdom, care must be taken, by their orderly deportment, to show that they had nothing in view but the public good, and the redress of all those grievances under which the people had so long labored.

ENCOURAGED by these speeches, the multitude flocked together, and armed themselves with axes, bills, bows, and such weapons as country people are usually possessed of. Flammoc and Joseph were chosen their leaders. They soon conducted the Cornish through the county of Devon, and reached that of Somerset. At Taunton the rebels killed, in their fury, an officious and

C H A P.
XXVI.
1497.

eager commissioner of the subsidy, whom they called the provost of Perin. When they reached Wells, they were joined by lord Audley, a nobleman of an ancient family, popular in his deportment, but vain, ambitious, and restless in his temper. He had from the beginning maintained a secret correspondence with the first movers of the insurrection; and was now joyfully received by them as their leader. Proud of the countenance given them by so considerable a nobleman, they continued their march; breathing destruction to the king's ministers and favorites, particularly to Morton, now a cardinal, and Sir Reginald Bray, who were deemed the most active instruments in all his oppressions. Notwithstanding their rage against the administration, they carefully followed the directions given them by their leaders; and as they met with no resistance, they committed, during their march, no violence or disorder.

THE rebels had been told by Flammoc, that the inhabitants of Kent, as they had ever, during all ages, remained unsubdued, and had even maintained their independence during the Norman conquest, would surely embrace their party, and declare themselves for a cause, which was no other than that of public good and general liberty. But the Kentish people had very lately distinguished themselves by repelling Perkin's invasion; and as they had received from the king many gracious acknowledgments for this service, their affections were, by that means, much conciliated to his government. It was easy, therefore, for the earl

of Kent, lord Abergavenny, and lord Cobham, who possessed great authority in those parts, to retain the people in obedience; and the Cornish rebels, though they pitched their camp near Eltham, at the very gates of London, and invited all the people to join them, got reinforcement from no quarter. There wanted not discontents every where, but no one would take part in so rash and ill-concerted an enterprise; and besides, the situation, in which the king's affairs then stood, discouraged even the boldest and most daring.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1497.

HENRY, in order to oppose the Scots, had already levied an army, which he put under the command of lord Daubeney, the chamberlain; and as soon as he heard of the Cornish insurrection, he ordered it to march southwards, and suppress the rebels. Not to leave the northern frontier defenceless, he dispatched thither the earl of Surrey, who assembled the forces on the borders, and made head against the enemy. Henry found here the concurrence of the three most fatal incidents that can befall a monarchy; a foreign enemy, a domestic rebellion, and a pretender to his crown; but he enjoyed great resources in his army and treasure, and still more, in the intrepidity and courage of his own temper. He did not, however, immediately give full scope to his military spirit. On other occasions, he had always hastened to a decision, and it was a usual saying with him, *that he desired but to see his rebels*: But as the Cornish mutineers

C H A P. behaved in an inoffensive manner, and committed
 XXVI. no spoil on the country; as they received no
 1497. accession of force on their march or in their
 encampment; and as such hasty and popular
 tumults might be expected to diminish every
 moment by delay; he took post in London,
 and assiduously prepared the means of ensuring
 victory.

Battle of
 Blackheath.

June 22d.

AFTER all his forces were collected, he divided
 them into three bodies, and marched out to
 assail the enemy. The first body, commanded
 by the earl of Oxford, and under him by the
 earls of Essex and Suffolk, were appointed to
 place themselves behind the hill on which the
 rebels were encamped: The second and most
 considerable, Henry put under the command of
 lord Daubeney, and ordered him to attack the
 enemy in front, and bring on the action. The
 third, he kept as a body of reserve about his own
 person, and took post in St. George's fields;
 where he secured the city, and could easily, as
 occasion served, either restore the fight or finish
 the victory. To put the enemy off their guard,
 he had spread a report that he was not to attack
 them till some days after; and the better to
 confirm them in this opinion, he began not the
 action till near the evening. Daubeney beat a
 detachment of the rebels from Deptford-bridge;
 and before their main body could be in order to
 receive him, he had gained the ascent of the
 hill, and placed himself in array before them.
 They were formidable from their numbers, being

C H A P.

XXVI.

1497.

sixteen thousand strong, and were not defective in valor; but being tumultuary troops, ill armed, and not provided with cavalry or artillery, they were but an unequal match for the king's forces. Daubeney began the attack with courage, and even with a contempt of the enemy, which had almost proved fatal to him. He rushed into the midst of them, and was taken prisoner; but soon after was released by his own troops. After some resistance, the rebels were broken, and put to flight³. Lord Audley, Flammoc, and Joseph, their leaders, were taken, and all three executed. The latter seemed even to exult in his end, and boasted, with a preposterous ambition, that he should make a figure in history. The rebels, being surrounded on every side by the king's troops, were almost all made prisoners; and immediately dismissed without farther punishment: Whether, that Henry was satisfied with the victims who had fallen in the field, and who amounted to near two thousand, or that he pitied the ignorance and simplicity of the multitude, or favored them on account of their inoffensive behaviour, or was pleased that they had never, during their insurrection, disputed his title, and had shown no attachment to the house of York, the highest crime, of which, in his eyes, they could have been guilty.

THE Scottish king was not idle during these commotions in England. He levied a considerable

³ Polydore Virgil, p. 601.

C H A P. XXVI. 1497. army, and sat down before the castle of Norham in Northumberland; but found that place, by the precaution of Fox, bishop of Durham, so well provided both with men and ammunition, that he made little or no progress in the siege. Hearing that the earl of Surrey had collected some forces and was advancing upon him, he retreated into his own country, and left the frontiers exposed to the inroads of the English general, who besieged and took Aiton, a small castle lying a few miles beyond Berwic. These unsuccessful or frivolous attempts on both sides prognosticated a speedy end to the war; and Henry, notwithstanding his superior force, was no less desirous than James of terminating the differences between the nations. Not to depart, however, from his dignity, by making the first advances, he employed in this friendly office Peter Hialas, a man of address and learning, who had come to him as ambassador from Ferdinand and Isabella, and who was charged with a commission of negotiating the marriage of the Infanta Catherine, their daughter, with Arthur prince of Wales *.

HIALAS took a journey northwards, and offered his mediation between James and Henry, as minister of a prince, who was in alliance with both potentates. Commissioners were soon appointed to meet, and confer on terms of

* Polydore Virgil, p. 603.

accommodation. The first demand of the English was, that Perkin should be put into their hands : James replied, that he himself was no judge of the young man's pretensions, but having received him as a suppliant, and promised him protection, he was determined not to betray a man, who had trusted to his good faith and his generosity. The next demand of the English met with no better reception: They required reparation for the ravages committed by the late inroads into England: The Scottish commissioners replied, that the spoils were like water spilt upon the ground, which could never be recovered, and that Henry's subjects were better able to bear the loss, than their master's to repair it. Henry's commissioners next proposed, that the two kings should have an interview at Newcastle, in order to adjust all differences; but James said, that he meant to treat of a peace, not to go a begging for it. Lest the conferences should break off altogether without effect, a truce was concluded for some months; and James, perceiving, that, while Perkin remained in Scotland, he himself never should enjoy a solid peace with Henry, privately desired him to depart the kingdom.

Truce with
Scotland.

ACCESS was now barred Perkin into the Low Countries, his usual retreat in all his disappointments. The Flemish merchants, who severely felt the loss resulting from the interruption of commerce with England, had made such interest in the archduke's council, that commissioners

C H A P. were sent to London, in order to treat of an
 XXVI. accommodation. The Flemish court agreed, that
 1497. all English rebels should be excluded the Low
 Countries; and in this prohibition the demesnes
 of the dutchess-dowager were expressly compre-
 hended. When this principal article was agreed
 to, all the other terms were easily adjusted. A
 treaty of commerce was finished, which was
 favorable to the Flemings, and to which they
 long gave the appellation of *Intercursus magnus*, the
 great treaty. And when the English merchants
 returned to their usual abode at Antwerp, they
 were publicly received, as in procession, with
 joy and festivity.

PERKIN was a Fleming by descent, though
 born in England; and it might therefore be
 doubted, whether he were included in the treaty
 between the two nations: But as he must dismiss
 all his English retainers if he took shelter in the
 Low Countries, and as he was sure of a cold
 reception, if not bad usage, among people who
 were determined to keep on terms of friendship
 with the court of England; he thought fit rather
 to hide himself, during some time, in the wilds
 and fastnesses of Ireland. Impatient however of
 a retreat, which was both disagreeable and dan-
 gerous, he held consultations with his followers,
 Herne, Skelton, and Astley, three broken trades-
 men: By their advice, he resolved to try the
 affections of the Cornish, whose mutinous dispo-
 sition, notwithstanding the king's lenity, still
 subsisted, after the suppression of their rebellion.

No sooner did he appear at Bodmin in Cornwall, than the populace, to the number of three thousand, flocked to his standard; and Perkin, elated with this appearance of success, took on him, for the first time, the appellation of Richard IV. king of England. Not to suffer the expectations of his followers to languish, he presented himself before Exeter; and by many fair promises, invited that city to join him. Finding that the inhabitants shut their gates against him, he laid siege to the place; but being unprovided with artillery, ammunition, and every thing requisite for the attempt, he made no progress in his undertaking. Messengers were sent to the king, informing him of this insurrection: The citizens of Exeter meanwhile were determined to hold out to the last extremity, in expectation of receiving succour from the well-known vigilance of that monarch.

C H A P.

XXVI.

1497.

WHEN Henry was informed, that Perkin was landed in England, he expressed great joy, and prepared himself with alacrity to attack him, in hopes of being able, at length, to put a period to pretensions, which had so long given him vexation and inquietude. All the courtiers, sensible that their activity on this occasion would be the most acceptable service which they could render the king, displayed their zeal for the enterprise, and forwarded his preparations. The lords Daubeney, and Broke, with Sir Rice ap Thomas, hastened forward with a small body of troops to the relief of Exeter. The earl of

C H A P. Devonshire, and the most considerable gentlemen
XXVI. in the county of that name, took arms of their
1497. own accord, and marched to join the king's
 generals. The duke of Buckingham put himself
 at the head of a troop, consisting of young
 nobility and gentry, who served as volunteers,
 and who longed for an opportunity of displaying
 their courage and their loyalty. The king
 himself prepared to follow with a considerable
 army; and thus all England seemed united against
 a pretender, who had at first engaged their at-
 tention and divided their affections.

PERKIN, informed of these great preparations,
 immediately raised the siege of Exeter, and
 retired to Taunton. Though his followers now
 amounted to the number of near seven thousand,
 and seemed still resolute to maintain his cause,
 he himself despaired of success, and secretly
 withdrew to the sanctuary of Beaulieu in the new
 forest. The Cornish rebels submitted to the king's
 mercy, and found that it was not yet exhausted
 in their behalf. Except a few persons of despe-
 rate fortunes, who were executed, and some
 others who were severely fined, all the rest were
 dismissed with impunity. Lady Catherine Gordon,
 wife to Perkin, fell into the hands of the victor,
 and was treated with a generosity, which does
 him honor. He soothed her mind with many
 marks of regard, placed her in a reputable station
 about the queen, and assigned her a pension,
 which she enjoyed even under his successor.

HENRY deliberated what course to take with Perkin himself. Some counselled him to make the privileges of the church yield to reasons of state, to take him by violence from the sanctuary, to inflict on him the punishment due to his temerity, and thus at once to put an end to an imposture which had long disturbed the government, and which the credulity of the people and the artifices of malecontents were still capable of reviving. But the king deemed not the matter of such importance as to merit so violent a remedy. He employed some persons to deal with Perkin, and persuade him, under promise of pardon, to deliver himself into the king's hands⁵. The king conducted him in a species of mock triumph to London. As Perkin passed along the road, and through the streets of the city, men of all ranks flocked about him, and the populace treated with the highest derision his fallen fortunes. They seemed desirous of revenging themselves, by their insults, for the shame, which their former belief of his impostures had thrown upon them. Though the eyes of the nation were generally opened with regard to Perkin's real parentage, Henry required of him a confession of his life and adventures; and he ordered the account of the whole to be dispersed, soon after, for the satisfaction of the public. But as his regard to decency made him entirely suppress the share which the dutchess of Burgundy had had in contriving and conducting

XXVI.

1498.

Perkin taken
prisoner.

⁵ Polydore Virgil, p. 606.

S H A P. the imposture, the people, who knew that she
 XXVI. had been the chief instrument in the whole affair, were inclined, on account of the silence on that head, to pay the less credit to the authenticity of the narrative.

1499.

BUT Perkin, though his life was granted him, was still detained in custody; and keepers were appointed to guard him. Impatient of confinement, he broke from his keepers, and flying to the sanctuary of Shyne, put himself into the hands of the prior of that monastery. The prior had obtained great credit by his character of sanctity; and he prevailed on the king again to grant a pardon to Perkin. But in order to reduce him to still greater contempt, he was set in the stocks at Westminster and Cheapside, and obliged in both places to read aloud to the people the confession, which had formerly been published in his name. He was then confined to the Tower, where his habits of restless intrigue and enterprise followed him. He insinuated himself into the intimacy of four servants of Sir John Digby, lieutenant of the Tower; and by their means, opened a correspondence with the earl of Warwic, who was confined in the same prison. This unfortunate prince, who had from his earliest youth been shut up from the commerce of men, and who was ignorant even of the most common affairs of life, had fallen into a simplicity which made him susceptible of any impression. The continued dread also of the more violent effects of Henry's tyranny, joined to the natural love of

liberty, engaged him to embrace a project for his escape, by the murder of the lieutenant; and Perkin offered to conduct the whole enterprise. The conspiracy escaped not the king's vigilance: It was even very generally believed, that the scheme had been laid by himself, in order to draw Warwic and Perkin into the snare: But the subsequent execution of two of Digby's servants for the contrivance, seems to clear the king of that imputation, which was indeed founded more on the general idea entertained of his character, than on any positive evidence.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1499.

PERKIN, by this new attempt, after so many enormities, had rendered himself totally unworthy of mercy: And he was accordingly arraigned, condemned, and soon after hanged at Tyburn, persisting still in the confession of his imposture. It happened about that very time, that one Wilford, a cordwainer's son, encouraged by the surprising credit given to other impostures, had undertaken to personate the earl of Warwic; and a priest had even ventured from the pulpit to recommend his cause to the people, who seemed still to retain a propensity to adopt it. This incident served Henry as a pretence for his severity towards that prince. He was brought to trial, and accused, not of contriving his escape (for as he was committed for no crime, the desire of liberty must have been regarded as natural and

Perkin executed.

* See note (E) at the end of the volume.

C H A P. innocent), but of forming designs to disturb the
XXVI. government, and raise an insurrection among the
 1499. people. Warwic confessed the indictment, was
 The earl of condemned, and the sentence was executed
 Warwic upon him.
 executed.
 21st Nov.

THIS violent act of tyranny, the great blemish of Henry's reign, by which he destroyed the last remaining male of the line of Plantagenet, begat great discontent among the people, who saw an unhappy prince, that had long been denied all the privileges of his high birth, even been cut off from the common benefits of nature, now at last deprived of life itself, merely for attempting to shake off that oppression under which he labored. In vain did Henry endeavour to alleviate the odium of this guilt, by sharing it with his ally, Ferdinand of Arragon, who, he said, had scrupled to give his daughter Catherine in marriage to Arthur, while any male descendant of the house of York remained. Men, on the contrary, felt higher indignation at seeing a young prince sacrificed, not to law and justice, but to the jealous politics of two subtle and crafty tyrants.

BUT though these discontents festered in the minds of men, they were so checked by Henry's watchful policy and steady severity, that they seemed not to weaken his government; and foreign princes, deeming his throne now entirely secure, paid him rather the greater deference and attention. The archduke, Philip, in particular, desired an interview with him; and Henry, who had passed over to Calais, agreed to meet him

in St. Peter's church near that city. The archduke, on his approaching the king, made haste to alight, and offered to hold Henry's stirrup, a mark of condescension, which that prince would not admit of. He called the king *father*, *patron*, *protector*; and by his whole behaviour expressed a strong desire of conciliating the friendship of England. The duke of Orleans had succeeded to the crown of France by the appellation of Lewis XII. and having carried his arms into Italy, and subdued the dutchy of Milan, his progress begat jealousy in Maximilian, Philip's father, as well as in Ferdinand, his father-in-law. By the counsel, therefore, of these monarchs, the young prince endeavoured by every art to acquire the amity of Henry, whom they regarded as the chief counterpoise to the greatness of France. No particular plan however of alliance seems to have been concerted between these two princes in their interview: All passed in general professions of affection and regard; at least, in remote projects of a closer union, by the future intermarriages of their children, who were then in a state of infancy.

THE Pope too, Alexander VI. neglected not the friendship of a monarch, whose reputation was spread over Europe. He sent a nuncio into England, who exhorted the king to take part in the great alliance projected for the recovery of the Holy Land, and to lead in person his forces against the infidels. The general frenzy for crusades was now entirely exhausted in Europe, but it

C H A P.
XXVI.

1500.

C H A P. XXVI. 1500. was still thought a necessary piece of decency to pretend zeal for those pious enterprises. Henry regretted to the nuncio the distance of his situation, which rendered it inconvenient for him to expose his person in defence of the Christian cause. He promised, however, his utmost assistance by aids and contributions; and rather than the pope should go alone to the holy wars, unaccompanied by any monarch, he even promised to overlook all other considerations, and to attend him in person. He only required as a necessary condition, that all differences should previously be adjusted among Christian princes, and that some sea-port towns in Italy should be consigned to him for his retreat and security. It was easy to conclude, that Henry had determined not to intermeddle in any war against the Turk: But as a great name, without any real assistance, is sometimes of service, the knights of Rhodes, who were at that time esteemed the bulwark of Christendom, chose the king protector of their order.

BUT the prince, whose alliance Henry valued the most, was Ferdinand of Arragon, whose vigorous and steady policy, always attended with success, had rendered him, in many respects, the most considerable monarch in Europe. There was also a remarkable similarity of character between these two princes: Both were full of craft, intrigue, and design; and though a resemblance of this nature be a slender foundation for confidence and amity, where the interests of the parties in the least interfere; such was the situation
of

of Henry and Ferdinand, that no jealousy ever on any occasion arose between them. The king had now the satisfaction of completing a marriage, which had been projected and negociated during the course of seven years, between Arthur prince of Wales and the Infanta Catherine, fourth daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella; he near sixteen years of age, she eighteen. But this marriage proved in the issue unprosperous. The young prince, a few months after, sickened and died, much regretted by the nation. Henry, desirous to continue his alliance with Spain, and also unwilling to restore Catherine's dowry, which was two hundred thousand ducats, obliged his second son, Henry, whom he created prince of Wales, to be contracted to the Infanta. The prince made all the opposition, of which a youth of twelve years of age was capable; but as the king persisted in his resolution, the espousals were at length, by means of the pope's dispensation, contracted between the parties: An event, which was afterwards attended with the most important consequences.

C H A P.
XXVI.

Marriage of
prince Ar-
thur with
Catherine of
Arragon.
12th Nov.

1502.
2d April.
His death.

THE same year, another marriage was celebrated, which was also, in the next age, productive of great events: The marriage of Margaret, the king's elder daughter, with James king of Scotland. This alliance had been negociated during three years, though interrupted by several broils; and Henry hoped, from the completion of it, to remove all source of discord with that neighbouring kingdom, by whose animosity England had so

Marriage of
the princess
Margaret
with the
king of
Scotland.

C H A P. often been infested. When this marriage was
XXVI. deliberated on in the English council, some
 objected, that England might, by means of that
 alliance, fall under the dominion of Scotland.
 “No;” replied Henry, “Scotland, in that
 “event, will only become an accession to England”.

1503.
 11th Feb.

Amidst these prosperous incidents, the king met
 with a domestic calamity, which made not such
 impresson on him as it merited: His queen died
 in childbed; and the infant did not long survive
 her. This princess was deservedly a favorite
 of the nation; and the general affection for her
 increased, on account of the harsh treatment,
 which, it was thought, she met with from her
 consort.

THE situation of the king's affairs, both at
 home and abroad, was now, in every respect,
 very fortunate. All the efforts of the European
 princes, both in war and negociation, were turned
 to the side of Italy; and the various events, which
 there arose, made Henry's alliance be courted
 by every party, yet interested him so little as
 never to touch him with concern or anxiety.
 His close connexions with Spain and Scotland
 ensured his tranquillity; and his continued successes
 over domestic enemies, owing to the prudence
 and vigor of his conduct, had reduced the people
 to entire submission and obedience. Uncontrouled,
 therefore, by apprehension or opposition of any
 kind, he gave full scope to his natural propensity;
 and avarice, which had ever been his ruling
 passion, being increased by age, and encouraged

Oppressions
 of the peo-
 ple.

by absolute authority, broke all restraints of shame or justice. He had found two ministers, Empson and Dudley, perfectly qualified to second his rapacious and tyrannical inclinations, and to prey upon his defenceless people. These instruments of oppression were both lawyers, the first of mean birth, of brutal manners, of an unrelenting temper; the second better born, better educated, and better bred, but equally unjust, severe, and inflexible. By their knowledge in law, these men were qualified to pervert the forms of justice to the oppression of the innocent; and the formidable authority of the king supported them in all their iniquities.

It was their usual practice at first to observe so far the appearance of law as to give indictments to those whom they intended to oppress: Upon which the persons were committed to prison, but never brought to trial; and were at length obliged, in order to recover their liberty, to pay heavy fines and ransoms, which were called mitigations and compositions. By degrees, the very appearance of law was neglected: The two ministers sent forth their precepts to attach men, and summon them before themselves and some others, at their private houses, in a court of commission, where, in a summary manner, without trial or jury, arbitrary decrees were issued, both in pleas of the crown and controversies between private parties. Juries themselves, when summoned, proved but small security to the subject; being brow-beaten by these oppressors;

C H A P. XXVI. 1503. nay, fined, imprisoned, and punished, if they gave sentence against the inclination of the ministers. The whole system of the feudal law, which still prevailed, was turned into a scheme of oppression. Even the king's wards, after they came of age, were not suffered to enter into possession of their lands without paying exorbitant fines. Men were also harassed with informations of intrusion upon scarce colorable titles. When an outlawry in a personal action was issued against any man, he was not allowed to purchase his charter of pardon, except on the payment of a great sum; and if he refused the composition required of him, the strict law, which, in such cases, allows forfeiture of goods, was rigorously insisted on. Nay, without any color of law, the half of men's lands and rents were seized during two years, as a penalty in case of outlawry. But the chief means of oppression, employed by these ministers, were the penal statutes, which, without consideration of rank, quality, or services, were rigidly put in execution against all men: Spies, informers, and inquisitors were rewarded and encouraged in every quarter of the kingdom: And no difference was made whether the statute were beneficial or hurtful, recent or obsolete, possible or impossible to be executed. The sole end of the king and his ministers was to amass money, and bring every one under the lash of their authority⁷.

⁷ Bacon, 629, 630. Hollingshed. p. 504. Polyd. Virg. p. 613. 615.

THROUGH the prevalence of such an arbitrary and iniquitous administration, the English, it may safely be affirmed, were considerable losers by their ancient privileges, which secured them from all taxations, except such as were imposed by their own consent in parliament. Had the king been impowered to levy general taxes at pleasure, he would naturally have abstained from these oppressive expedients, which destroyed all security in private property, and begat an universal diffidence throughout the nation. In vain did the people look for protection from the parliament, which was pretty frequently summoned during this reign. That assembly was so overawed, that at this very time, during the greatest rage of Henry's oppressions, the commons chose Dudley their speaker, the very man who was the chief instrument of his iniquities. And though the king was known to be immensely opulent, and had no pretence of wars or expensive enterprises of any kind, they granted him the subsidy, which he demanded. But so insatiable was his avarice, that next year he levied a new benevolence, and renewed that arbitrary and oppressive method of taxation. By all these arts of accumulation, joined to a rigid frugality in his expence, he so filled his coffers, that he is said to have possessed in ready money the sum of 1,800,000 pounds: A treasure almost incredible, if we consider the scarcity of money in those times^{*}.

C H A P.
XXVI.1504.
25th Jan.
A parliament.

1504.

^{*} Silver was during this reign 37 shillings and sixpence a pound, which makes Henry's treasure near three millions.

C H A P. XXVI. 1505. BUT while Henry was enriching himself by the spoils of his oppressed people, there happened an event abroad, which engaged his attention, and was even the object of his anxiety and concern. Isabella, queen of Castile, died about this time; and it was foreseen, that by this incident the fortunes of Ferdinand, her husband, would be much affected. The king was not only attentive to the fate of his ally, and watchful lest the general system of Europe should be affected by so important an event: He also considered the similarity of his own situation with that of Ferdinand, and regarded the issue of these transactions as a precedent for himself. Joan, the daughter of Ferdinand by Isabella, was married to the archduke Philip, and being, in right of her mother, heir of Castile, seemed entitled to dispute with Ferdinand the present possession of that kingdom. Henry knew, that notwithstanding his own pretensions by the house of Lancaster, the greater part of the nation was convinced of the superiority of his wife's title; and he dreaded lest the prince of Wales, who was daily advancing towards manhood, might be tempted by ambition to lay immediate claim to the crown. By his perpetual

of our present money. Besides, many commodities have become above thrice as dear by the increase of gold and silver in Europe. And what is a circumstance of still greater weight, all other states were then very poor, in comparison of what they are at present: These circumstances make Henry's treasure appear very great; and may lead us to conceive the oppressions of his government.

attention to depress the partisans of the York family; he had more closely united them into one party, and increased their desire of shaking off that yoke, under which they had so long labored, and of taking every advantage, which his oppressive government should give his enemies against him. And as he possessed no independent force like Ferdinand, and governed a kingdom more turbulent and unruly, which he himself, by his narrow politics, had confirmed in factious prejudices; he apprehended that his situation would prove in the issue still more precarious.

NOTHING at first could turn out more contrary to the king's wishes than the transactions in Spain. Ferdinand, as well as Henry, had become very unpopular, and from a like cause, his former exactions and impositions; and the states of Castile discovered an evident resolution of preferring the title of Philip and Joan. In order to take advantage of these favorable dispositions, the archduke, now king of Castile, attended by his consort, embarked for Spain during the winter season; but meeting with a violent tempest in the channel, was obliged to take shelter in the harbour of Weymouth. Sir John Trenchard, a gentleman of authority in the county of Dorset, hearing of a fleet upon the coast, had assembled some forces; and being joined by Sir John Cary, who was also at the head of an armed body, he came to that town. Finding that Philip, in order to relieve his sickness and fatigue, was already come ashore, he invited him to his house; and imme-

C H A P.
XXVI.

1506.
Arrival of
the king of
Castile.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1506.

diately dispatched a messenger, to inform the court of this important incident. The king sent in all haste the earl of Arundel to compliment Philip on his arrival in England, and to inform him, that he intended to pay him a visit in person, and to give him a suitable reception in his dominions. Philip knew, that he could not now depart without the king's consent; and therefore, for the sake of dispatch, he resolved to anticipate his visit, and to have an interview with him at Windsor. Henry received him with all the magnificence possible, and with all the seeming cordiality; but he resolved, notwithstanding, to draw some advantage from this involuntary visit, paid him by his royal guest.

Intrigues of
the earl of
Suffolk.

EDMOND de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, nephew to Edward IV. and brother to the earl of Lincoln, slain in the battle of Stoke, had some years before killed a man in a sudden fit of passion, and had been obliged to apply to the king for a remission of the crime. The king had granted his request; but being little indulgent to all persons connected with the house of York, he obliged him to appear openly in court and plead his pardon. Suffolk, more resenting the affront than grateful for the favor, had fled into Flanders, and taken shelter with his aunt, the dutchess of Burgundy: But being promised forgiveness by the king, he returned to England, and obtained a new pardon. Actuated, however, by the natural inquietude of his temper, and uneasy from debts which he had contracted by his great expence at prince

Arthur's wedding, he again made an elopement into Flanders. The king, well acquainted with the general discontent which prevailed against his administration, neglected not this incident, which might become of importance; and he employed his usual artifices to elude the efforts of his enemies. He directed Sir Robert Curson, governor of the castle of Hammes, to desert his charge, and to insinuate himself into the confidence of Suffolk, by making him a tender of his services. Upon information secretly conveyed by Curson, the king seized William Courtney, eldest son to the earl of Devonshire, and married to the lady Catherine, sister of the queen; William de la Pole, brother to the earl of Suffolk; Sir James Tyrrel, and Sir James Windham, with some persons of inferior quality; and he committed them to custody. Lord Abergavenny and Sir Thomas Green were also apprehended; but were soon after released from their confinement. William de la Pole was long detained in prison: Courtney was attainted and, though not executed, he recovered not his liberty during the king's life-time. But Henry's chief severity fell upon Sir James Windham, and Sir James Tyrrel, who were brought to their trial, condemned, and executed: The fate of the latter gave general satisfaction, on account of his participation in the murder of the young princes, sons of Edward IV. Notwithstanding these discoveries and executions, Curson was still able to maintain his credit with the earl of Suffolk: Henry, in order to remove all suspicion, had ordered him to be excommunicated,

C H A P.

XXVI.

1506.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1506.

together with Suffolk himself, for his pretended rebellion. But after that traitor had performed all the services expected from him, he suddenly deserted the earl, and came over to England, where the king received him with unusual marks of favor and confidence. Suffolk, astonished at this instance of perfidy, finding that even the dutchess of Burgundy, tired with so many fruitless attempts, had become indifferent to his cause, fled secretly into France, then into Germany, and returned at last into the Low-Countries: where he was protected, though not countenanced, by Philip, then in close alliance with the king.

HENRY neglected not the present opportunity of complaining to his guest of the reception which Suffolk had met with in his dominions. "I really thought," replied the king of Castile, "that your greatness and felicity had set you far above apprehensions from any person of so little consequence: But to give you satisfaction, I shall banish him my state." "I expect that you will carry your complaisance farther," said the king; "I desire to have Suffolk put into my hands, where alone I can depend upon his submission and obedience." "That measure," said Philip, "will reflect dishonor upon you as well as myself. You will be thought to have treated me as a prisoner." "Then the matter is at an end," replied the king, "for I will take that dishonor upon me; and so your honor is saved." The king of Castile found himself

² Bacon, p. 633.

under a necessity of complying; but he first exacted Henry's promise that he would spare Suffolk's life. That nobleman was invited over to England by Philip; as if the king would grant him a pardon, on the intercession of his friend and ally. Upon his appearance, he was committed to the Tower; and the king of Castile, having fully satisfied Henry, as well by his concession, as by signing a treaty of commerce between England and Castile, which was advantageous to the former kingdom^{1°}, was at last allowed to depart, after a stay of three months. He landed in Spain, was joyfully received by the Castilians, and put in possession of the throne. He died soon after; and Joan, his widow, falling into deep melancholy, Ferdinand was again enabled to re-instate himself in authority, and to govern, till the day of his death, the whole Spanish monarchy.

THE king survived these transactions two years; but nothing memorable occurs in the remaining part of his reign, except his affiancing his second daughter Mary to the young archduke Charles, son of Philip of Castile. He entertained also some intentions of marriage for himself, first with the queen-dowager of Naples, relict of Ferdinand; afterwards with the dutchess dowager of Savoy, daughter of Maximilian, and sister of Philip. But the decline of his health put an end to all such thoughts; and he began to cast his eye towards that future existence, which the iniquities and

C H A P.
XXVI.

1508.

Sickness of
the king.

^{1°} Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 142.

C H A P. XXVI. severities of his reign rendered a very dismal prospect to him. To allay the terrors, under which he labored, he endeavoured, by distributing alms and founding religious houses, to make atonement for his crimes, and to purchase, by the sacrifice of part of his ill-gotten treasures, a reconciliation with his offended Maker. Remorse even seized him at intervals for the abuse of his authority by Empson and Dudley; but not sufficient to make him stop the rapacious hand of those oppressors. Sir William Capel was again fined two thousand pounds under some frivolous pretence, and was committed to the Tower for daring to murmur against the iniquity. Harris, an alderman of London, was indicted, and died of vexation, before his trial came to an issue. Sir Laurence Ailmer, who had been mayor, and his two sheriffs, were condemned in heavy fines, and sent to prison till they made payment. The king gave countenance to all these oppressions; till death, by its nearer approaches, impressed new terrors upon him; and he then ordered, by a general clause in his will, that restitution should be made to all those whom he had injured. He died of a consumption at his favorite palace of Richmond, after a reign of twenty-three years and eight months, and in the fifty-second year of his age¹¹.

1509.
His death,
22d April.

THE reign of Henry VII. was, in the main, fortunate for his people at home, and honorable

¹¹ Dugd. baronage, II. p. 237.

abroad. He put an end to the civil wars with which the nation had long been harassed, he maintained peace and order in the state, he depressed the former exorbitant power of the nobility, and, together with the friendship of some foreign princes, he acquired the consideration and regard of all. He loved peace without fearing war; though agitated with continual suspicions of his servants and ministers, he discovered no timidity, either in the conduct of his affairs, or in the day of battle; and though often severe in his punishments, he was commonly less actuated by revenge than by maxims of policy. The services, which he rendered the people, were derived from his views of private advantage, rather than the motives of public spirit; and where he deviated from interested regards, it was unknown to himself, and ever from the malignant prejudices of faction, or the mean projects of avarice; not from the fallies of passion, or allurements of pleasure; still less, from the benign motives of friendship and generosity. His capacity was excellent, but somewhat contracted by the narrowness of his heart; he possessed insinuation and address, but never employed these talents, except where some great point of interest was to be gained; and while he neglected to conciliate the affections of his people, he often felt the danger of resting his authority on their fear and reverence alone. He was always extremely attentive to his affairs; but possessed not the faculty of seeing far into futurity; and was more expert

C H A P.

XXVI.

1509.

and character.

C H A P. XXVI. 1509. at providing a remedy for his mistakes than judicious in avoiding them. Avarice was, on the whole, his ruling passion¹²; and he remains an instance, almost singular; of a man, placed in a high station, and possessed of talents for great affairs, in whom that passion predominated above ambition. Even among private persons, avarice is commonly nothing but a species of ambition, and is chiefly incited by the prospect of that regard, distinction, and consideration, which attend on riches.

THE power of the kings of England had always been somewhat irregular or discretionary; but was scarcely ever so absolute during any former reign, at least after the establishment of the great charter, as during that of Henry. Besides the advantages, derived from the personal character of the man, full of vigor, industry, and severity, deliberate in all projects, steady in every purpose and attended with caution, as well as good fortune, in every enterprise; he came to the throne after long and bloody civil wars, which had destroyed all the great nobility,

¹² As a proof of Henry's attention to the smallest profits, Bacon tells us, that he had seen a book of accompts kept by Empson, and subscribed in almost every leaf by the king's own hand. "*Item*, Received of such a one five marks for a pardon, which, if it do not pass, the money to be repayed, or the party otherwise satisfied." Opposite to the memorandum, the king had writ with his own hand, "otherwise satisfied." Bacon, p. 630.

who alone could resist the encroachments of his authority: The people were tired with discord and intestine convulsions, and willing to submit to usurpations, and even to injuries, rather than plunge themselves anew into like miseries: The fruitless efforts made against him served always, as is usual, to confirm his authority: As he ruled by a faction, and the lesser faction, all those on whom he conferred offices, sensible that they owed every thing to his protection, were willing to support his power, though at the expence of justice and national privileges. These seem the chief causes which at this time bestowed on the crown so considerable an addition of prerogative, and rendered the present reign a kind of epoch in the English constitution.

THIS prince, though he exalted his prerogative above law, is celebrated by his historian for many good laws, which he made be enacted for the government of his subjects. Several considerable regulations, indeed, are found among the statutes of this reign, both with regard to the police of the kingdom, and its commerce: But the former are generally contrived with much better judgment than the latter. The more simple ideas of order and equity are sufficient to guide a legislator in every thing that regards the internal administration of justice: But the principles of commerce are much more complicated, and require long experience and deep reflection to be well understood in any state. The real consequence of a law or practice is there often con-

C H A P.
XXVI.
1509.

His laws.

CHAP. contrary to first appearances. No wonder, that,
 XXVI. during the reign of Henry VII. these matters
 1509. were frequently mistaken; and it may safely be
 affirmed, that even in the age of lord Bacon,
 very imperfect and erroneous ideas were formed
 on that subject.

EARLY in Henry's reign, the authority of the
 Star Chamber, which was before founded on
 common law, and ancient practice, was in some
 cases confirmed by act of parliament¹³: Lord
 Bacon extols the utility of this court; but men
 began, even during the age of that historian,
 to feel that so arbitrary a jurisdiction was incom-
 patible with liberty; and in proportion as the
 spirit of independence still rose higher in the na-
 tion, the aversion to it increased, till it was en-
 tirely abolished by act of parliament in the reign
 of Charles I. a little before the commencement
 of the civil wars.

LAWS were passed in this reign, ordaining the
 king's suit for murder to be carried on within a
 year and day¹⁴. Formerly, it did not usually
 commence till after; and as the friends of the
 person murdered, often, in the interval, com-
 pounded matters with the criminal, the crime
 frequently passed unpunished. Suits were given
 to the poor *in formâ pauperis*, as it is called:
 That is, without paying dues for the writs, or
 any fees to the council¹⁵: A good law at all times,

¹³ See note [F] at the end of the volume.

¹⁴ 3 H. 7. cap. 1. ¹⁵ 11 H. 7. cap. 12.

especially

especially in that age, when the people labored under the oppression of the great; but a law difficult to be carried into execution. A law was made against carrying off any woman by force¹⁶. The benefit of clergy was abridged¹⁷; and the criminal, on the first offence, was ordered to be burned in the hand with a letter denoting his crime; after which he was punished capitally for any new offence. Sheriffs were no longer allowed to fine any person, without previously summoning him before their court¹⁸. It is strange, that such a practice should ever have prevailed. Attaint of juries was granted in cases which exceeded forty pounds value¹⁹. A law which has an appearance of equity, but which was afterwards found inconvenient. Actions popular were not allowed to be eluded by fraud or covin. If any servant of the king's conspired against the life of the steward, treasurer, or comptroller of the king's household, this design, though not followed by any overt act, was made liable to the punishment of felony²⁰. This statute was enacted for the security of archbishop Morton, who found himself exposed to the enmity of great numbers.

THERE scarcely passed any session during this reign without some statute against engaging retainers, and giving them badges or liveries²¹;

¹⁶ 3 H. 7. cap. 2.

¹⁷ 4 H. 7. cap. 13.

¹⁸ 11 H. 7. cap. 15.

¹⁹ Ibid. cap. 24. 19 H. 7.

cap. 3.

²⁰ 3 H. 7. cap. 13.

²¹ 3 H. 7. cap. 1. & 12.

11 H. 7. cap. 3.

19 H. 7. cap. 14.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1509.

a practice, by which they were, in a manner, enlisted under some great lord, and were kept in readiness to assist him in all wars, insurrections, riots, violences, and even in bearing evidence for him in courts of justice²². This disorder, which had prevailed during many reigns, when the law could give little protection to the subject, was then deeply rooted in England; and it required all the vigilance and rigor of Henry to extirpate it. There is a story of his severity against this abuse; and it seems to merit praise, though it is commonly cited as an instance of his avarice and rapacity. The earl of Oxford, his favorite general, in whom he always placed great and deserved confidence, having splendidly entertained him at his castle of Henningham, was desirous of making a parade of his magnificence at the departure of his royal guest; and ordered all his retainers, with their liveries and badges, to be drawn up in two lines, that their appearance might be the more gallant and splendid. "My lord," said the king, "I have heard much of your hospitality: but the truth far exceeds the report. These handsome gentlemen and yeomen, whom I see on both sides of me, are, no doubt, your menial servants." The earl smiled, and confessed that his fortune was too narrow for such magnificence. "They are most of them," subjoined he, "my retainers, who are come to do me service at this

²² 3 H. 7. cap. 12. 11 H. 7. cap. 25.

“ time; when they know I am honored with
 “ your majesty’s presence. ” The king started
 a little, and said, “ By my faith, my lord,
 “ I thank you for your good cheer, but I must
 “ not allow my laws to be broken in my sight.
 “ My attorney must speak with you. ” Oxford
 is said to have payed no less than fifteen thousand
 marks, as composition for his offence.

C H A P.
 XXVI.
 1509.

THE increase of the arts, more effectually
 than all the severities of law, put an end to
 this pernicious practice. The nobility, instead
 of vying with each other, in the number and
 boldness of their retainers, acquired by degrees
 a more civilized species of emulation, and endea-
 voured to excel in the splendor and elegance of
 their equipage, houses, and tables. The common
 people, no longer maintained in vicious idleness,
 by their superiors, were obliged to learn some
 calling or industry, and became useful both to
 themselves and to others. And it must be
 acknowledged, in spite of those who declaim so
 violently against refinement in the arts, or what
 they are pleased to call luxury, that, as much
 as an industrious tradesman is both a better man
 and a better citizen than one of those idle retainers,
 who formerly depended on the great families; so
 much is the life of a modern nobleman more
 laudable than that of an ancient baron²³.

BUT the most important law in its con-
 sequences, which was enacted during the reign

²³ See note [G] at the end of the volume.

O H A P. of Henry, was that by which the nobility and
 XXVI. gentry acquired a power of breaking the ancient
 1509. entails, and of alienating their estates²⁴. By
 means of this law, joined to the beginning
 of luxury and refinements of the age, the great
 fortunes of the barons were gradually dissipated,
 and the property of the commons increased in
 England. It is probable, that Henry foresaw
 and intended this consequence; because the con-
 stant scheme of his policy consisted in depressing
 the great, and exalting churchmen, lawyers,
 and men of new families, who were more
 dependent on him.

THIS king's love of money naturally led him
 to encourage commerce, which increased his cus-
 toms; but, if we may judge by most of the laws
 enacted during his reign, trade and industry were
 rather hurt than promoted by the care and atten-
 tion given to them. Severe laws were made
 against taking interest for money, which was
 then denominated usury²⁵. Even the profits of
 exchange were prohibited, as favoring of
 usury²⁶, which the superstition of the age zea-
 lously proscribed. All evasive contracts by which
 profits could be made from the loan of money,

²⁴ 4 H. 7. cap. 24. The practice of breaking entails
 by means of a fine and recovery was introduced in the
 reign of Edward the IVth: But it was not, properly
 speaking, law, till the statute of Henry the VIIth;
 which, by correcting some abuses that attended that
 practice, gave indirectly a sanction to it.

²⁵ 3 H. 7. cap. 5. ²⁶ Ibid. cap. 6.

were also carefully guarded against ²⁷. It is needless to observe how unreasonable and iniquitous these laws, how impossible to be executed, and how hurtful to trade, if they could take place. We may observe, however, to the praise of this king, that sometimes, in order to promote commerce, he lent to merchants sums of money, without interest; when he knew, that their stock was not sufficient for those enterprises, which they had in view ²⁸.

LAWs were made against the exportation of money, plate, or bullion ²⁹: A precaution, which serves to no other purpose than to make more be exported. But so far was the anxiety on this head carried, that merchants alien, who imported commodities into the kingdom, were obliged to invest, in English commodities, all the money acquired by their sales, in order to prevent their conveying it away in a clandestine manner ³⁰.

It was prohibited to export horses; as if that exportation did not encourage the breed, and render them more plentiful in the kingdom ³¹. In order to promote archery no bows were to be sold at a higher price than six shillings and four-pence ³², reducing money to the denomination of our time. The only effect of this regulation must be either that the people would be supplied with bad bows or none at all. Prices were also affixed to woollen cloth ³³, to caps and hats ³⁴:

²⁷ 7 H. 7. cap. 8. ²⁸ Polyd. Virg. ²⁹ 4 H. 7. cap. 23.
³⁰ 3 H. 7. cap. 8. ³¹ 11 H. 7. cap. 13.
³² 3 H. 7. cap. 12. ³³ 4 H. 7. cap. 8. ³⁴ Ibid. cap. 2.
 F f 3

C H A P. XXVI
1509. And the wages of laborers were regulated by law³⁵. It is evident, that these matters ought always to be left free, and be intrusted to the common course of business and commerce. To some it may appear surprising, that the price of a yard of scarlet cloth should be limited to six-and-twenty shillings, money of our age; that of a yard of colored cloth to eighteen; higher prices than these commodities bear at present: and that the wages of a tradesman, such as a mason, bricklayer, tiler, &c. should be regulated at near ten-pence a-day; which is not much inferior to the present wages given in some parts of England. Labor and commodities have certainly risen since the discovery of the West-Indies; but not so much in every particular as is generally imagined. The greater industry of the present times has increased the number of tradesmen and laborers, so as to keep wages nearer a par than could be expected from the great increase of gold and silver. And the additional art, employed in the finer manufactures, has even made some of these commodities fall below their former value. Not to mention, that merchants and dealers, being contented with less profit than formerly, afford the goods cheaper to their customers. It appears by a statute of this reign³⁶, that goods bought for sixteen pence would sometimes be sold by the merchants for three shillings. The commodities

³⁵ 11 H. 7. cap. 22. ³⁶ 4 H. 7. cap. 9.

whose price has chiefly risen, are butcher's meat, C H A P.
fowl, and fish (especially the latter), which cannot XXVI.
be much augmented in quantity by the increase 1502.
of art and industry. The profession, which then
abounded most, and was sometimes embraced by
persons of the lowest rank, was the church: By
a clause of a statute, all clerks or students of the
university were forbidden to beg, without a per-
mission from the vice-chancellor ³⁷.

ONE great cause of the low state of industry
during this period, was the restraints put upon
it; and the parliament, or rather the king (for
he was the prime mover in every thing), enlarged
a little some of these limitations; but not to the
degree that was requisite. A law had been
enacted during the reign of Henry IV. ³⁸, that no
man could bind his son or daughter to an ap-
prenticeship, unless he were possessed of twenty
shillings a-year in land; and Henry VII. because
the decay of manufactures was complained of in
Norwich from the want of hands, exempted that
city from the penalties of the law ³⁹. Afterwards
the whole county of Norfolk obtained a like
exemption with regard to some branches of the
woollen manufacture ⁴⁰. These absurd limitations
proceeded from a desire of promoting husbandry,
which however is never more effectually encour-
aged than by the increase of manufactures. For
a like reason, the law enacted against inclosures,

³⁷ 11 H. 7. cap. 22.

³⁸ 7 H. 7. cap. 17.

³⁹ 11 H. 7. cap. 11.

⁴⁰ 12 H. 7. cap. 1.

C H A P. and for the keeping up of farm houses ⁴¹, scarcely
 XXVI. deserves the high praises bestowed on it by lord
 Bacon. If husbandmen understand agriculture,
 and have a ready vent for their commodities, we
 need not dread a diminution of the people, em-
 ployed in the country. All methods of supporting
 populousness, except by the interest of the pro-
 prietors, are violent and ineffectual. During a
 century and a half after this period, there was
 a frequent renewal of laws and edicts against
 depopulation; whence we may infer, that none
 of them were ever executed. The natural course
 of improvement at last provided a remedy.

ONE check to industry in England was the
 erecting of corporations; an abuse which is not
 yet entirely corrected. A law was enacted, that
 corporations should not pass any by-laws without
 the consent of three of the chief officers of state ⁴².
 They were prohibited from imposing tolls at their
 gates ⁴³. The cities of Gloucester and Worcester
 had even imposed tolls on the Severne, which
 were abolished ⁴⁴.

THERE is a law of this reign ⁴⁵, containing a
 preamble, by which it appears, that the company
 of merchant adventurers in London had, by their
 own authority, debarred all the other merchants
 of the kingdom, from trading to the great marts
 in the Low Countries, unless each trader previously
 paid them the sum of near seventy pounds. It is

⁴¹ 4 H. 7. cap. 19.

⁴² 19 H. 7. cap. 7.

⁴³ Ibid. cap. 8.

⁴⁴ Ib. cap. 18.

⁴⁵ 12 H. 7. cap. 6.

surprising that such a by-law (if it deserve the name) could ever be carried into execution, and that the authority of parliament should be requisite to abrogate it.

C H A P.
XXVI.
1509.

It was during this reign, on the second of August 1492, a little before sun-set, that Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, set out from Spain on his memorable voyage for the discovery of the western world; and a few years after, Vasquez de Gama, a Portuguese, passed the Cape of Good Hope, and opened a new passage to the East Indies. These great events were attended with important consequences to all the nations of Europe, even to such as were not immediately concerned in those naval enterprises. The enlargement of commerce and navigation increased industry and the arts every where: The nobles dissipated their fortunes in expensive pleasures: Men of an inferior rank both acquired a share in the landed property, and created to themselves a considerable property of a new kind, in stock, commodities, art, credit, and correspondence. In some nations the privileges of the commons increased, by this increase of property: In most nations, the kings, finding arms to be dropped by the barons, who could no longer endure their former rude manner of life, established standing armies, and subdued the liberties of their kingdoms: But in all places, the condition of the people, from the depression of the petty tyrants, by whom they had formerly been oppressed, rather than governed, received great improve-

C H A P. ment, and they acquired, if not entire liberty,
 XXVI. at least the most considerable advantages of it.
 1509. And as the general course of events thus tended
 to depress the nobles and exalt the people, Henry
 VII. who also embraced that system of policy,
 has acquired more praise, than his institutions,
 strictly speaking, seem of themselves to deserve,
 on account of any profound wisdom attending
 them.

It was by accident only, that the king had
 not a considerable share in those great naval dis-
 coveries, by which the present age was so much
 distinguished. Columbus, after meeting with
 many repulses from the courts of Portugal and
 Spain, sent his brother, Bartholomew, to London,
 in order to explain his projects to Henry, and
 crave his protection for the execution of them.
 The king invited him over to England; but his
 brother, being taken by pirates, was detained
 in his voyage; and Columbus, meanwhile, having
 obtained the countenance of Isabella, was supplied
 with a small fleet, and happily executed his enter-
 prise. Henry was not discouraged by this disap-
 pointment: He fitted out Sebastian Cabot, a
 Venetian, settled in Bristol; and sent him west-
 wards in 1498, in search of new countries.
 Cabot discovered the main land of America
 towards the sixtieth degree of northern latitude:
 He sailed southwards along the coast, and dis-
 covered Newfoundland, and other countries:
 But returned to England, without making any
 conquest or settlement. Elliot and other mer-

chants in Bristol made a like attempt in 1502⁴⁶. The king expended fourteen thousand pounds in building one ship called the *Great Harry*⁴⁷. She was, properly speaking, the first ship in the English navy. Before this period, when the prince wanted a fleet, he had no other expedient than hiring or pressing ships from the merchants.

C H A P.

XXVI.

1509.

BUT though this improvement of navigation, and the discovery of both the Indies, was the most memorable incident that happened during this or any other period, it was not the only great event, by which the age was distinguished. In 1453, Constantinople was taken by the Turks; and the Greeks, among whom some remains of learning were still preserved, being scattered by these barbarians, took shelter in Italy, and imported, together with their admirable language, a tincture of their science and of their refined taste in poetry and eloquence. About the same time, the purity of the Latin tongue was revived, the study of antiquity became fashionable, and the esteem for literature gradually propagated itself throughout every nation in Europe. The art of printing, invented about that time, extremely facilitated the progress of all these improvements: The invention of gunpowder changed the whole art of war: Mighty innovations were soon after made in religion, such as not only affected those states that embraced them, but even those that adhered to the ancient faith and worship: And

⁴⁶ Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 37.⁴⁷ Stowe, p. 484.

6 H A P. thus a general revolution was made in human
XXVI. affairs throughout this part of the world; and
1509. men gradually attained that situation, with regard
to commerce, arts, science, government, police,
and cultivation, in which they have ever since
persevered. Here therefore commences the useful,
as well as the more agreeable part of modern
annals; certainty has place in all the considerable,
and even most of the minute parts of historical
narration; a great variety of events, preserved by
printing, give the author the power of selecting,
as well as adorning, the facts, which he relates;
and as each incident has a reference to our pre-
sent manners and situation, instructive lessons
occur every moment during the course of the
narration. Whoever carries his anxious researches
into preceding periods is moved by a curiosity,
liberal indeed and commendable; not by any
necessity for acquiring knowledge of public affairs,
or the arts of civil government.

N O T E S
T O T H E
F O U R T H V O L U M E

NOTE [A], p. 209.

THAT we may judge how arbitrary a court, that of the constable of England was, we may peruse the patent granted to the earl of Rivers in this reign, as it is to be found in Spellman's Glossary in verb. *Constabularius*; as also, more fully in Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581. Here is a clause of it: *Et ulterius de uberiori gratiâ nostrâ eidem comiti de Rivers plenam potestatem damus ad cognoscendum, & procedendum, in omnibus, & singulis, causis et negotiis, de et super crimine lesæ majestatis seu super occasione cæterisque causis, quibuscunque per præfatum comitem de Rivers, ut constabularium Angliæ — quæ in curiâ constabularii Angliæ ab antiquo, viz. tempore dicti domini Gulielmi conquestoris seu aliquo tempore citra tractari, audiri, examinari, aut decidi consueverant, aut jure debuerant, aut debent, causasque et negotia prædicta cum omnibus et singulis emergentibus, incidentibus et connexis, audiendum, examinandum, et sine debito terminandum, etiam summarie et de plano, sine strepitu et figurâ justitiæ, solâ facti veritate inspectâ, ac etiam manu regiâ, si opportunum visum fuerit eidem comiti de Rivers, vices nostras, appellatione remotâ.* The office of constable was perpetual in the monarchy; its jurisdiction was not limited to times of war, as appears from this patent, and as we learn from Spellman: Yet its authority was in direct contradiction to *Magna Charta*; and it is evident, that no *regular* liberty could subsist with it. It involved a full dictatorial power, continually subsisting in the state. The only check on the crown, besides the want of force to support all its prerogatives, was, that the office of constable was commonly

either hereditary or during life; and the person invested with it, was, for that reason, not so proper an instrument of arbitrary power in the king. Accordingly the office was suppressed by Henry VIII. the most arbitrary of all the English princes. The practice, however, of exercising martial law, still subsisted; and was not abolished till the petition of Right under Charles I. This was the epoch of true liberty, confirmed by the Restoration, and enlarged and secured by the Revolution.

NOTE [B], p. 223.

WE shall give an instance: Almost all the historians, even Comines, and the continuator of the annals of Croyland, assert that Edward was about this time taken prisoner by Clarence and Warwic, and was committed to the custody of the archbishop of York, brother to the earl; but being allowed to take the diversion of hunting by this prelate, he made his escape, and afterwards chased the rebels out of the kingdom. But that all the story is false appears from Rymer, where we find, that the king, throughout all this period, continually exercised his authority, and never was interrupted in his government. On the 7th of March 1470, he gives a commission of array to Clarence, whom he then imagined a good subject; and on the 23d of the same month, we find him issuing an order for apprehending him. Besides, in the king's manifesto against the duke and earl, (Clauſ. 10 Edward IV. m. 7, 8.) where he enumerates all their treasons, he mentions no such fact: He does not so much as accuse them of exciting young Welles's rebellion: He only says, that they exhorted him to continue in his rebellion. We may judge how smaller facts will be misrepresented by historians, who can in the most material transactions mistake so grossly. There may even some doubt arise with regard to the proposal of marriage made to Bona of Savoy; though almost all the historians concur in it, and the fact be very likely in itself: For there are no traces in Rymer of any such embassy of Warwic's to France. The chief certainty

in this and the preceding reign arises either from public records, or from the notice taken of certain passages by the French historians. On the contrary, for some centuries after the conquest, the French history is not complete without the assistance of English authors. We may conjecture, that the reason of the scarcity of historians during this period, was the destruction of the convents, which ensued so soon after: Copies of the more recent historians not being yet sufficiently dispersed, these histories have perished.

NOTE [C], p. 276.

SIR Thomas More, who has been followed, or rather transcribed, by all the historians of this short reign, says, that Jane Shore had fallen into connexions with lord Hastings; and this account agrees best with the course of the events: But in a proclamation of Richard's, to be found in Rymer, vol. xii. p. 204, the marquis of Dorset is reproached with these connexions. This reproach, however, might have been invented by Richard, or founded only on popular rumor; and is not sufficient to overbalance the authority of Sir Thomas More. The proclamation is remarkable for the hypocritical purity of manners affected by Richard: This bloody and treacherous tyrant upbraids the marquis and others, with their gallantries and intrigues as the most terrible enormities.

NOTE [D], p. 304.

EVERY one that has perused the ancient monkish writers, knows, that, however barbarous their own style, they are full of allusions to the Latin classics, especially the poets. There seems also in those middle ages to have remained many ancient books, that are now lost. Malmesbury, who flourished in the reign of Henry I. and king Stephen, quotes Livy's description of Cæsar's passage over the Rubicon. Fitz-Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II. alludes to a passage in the larger history of Sallust. In the collection of

letters, which passes under the name of Thomas a Becket, we see how familiar all the ancient history and ancient books were to the more ingenious and more dignified churchmen of that time, and consequently how much that order of men must have surpassed all the other members of the society. That prelate and his friends call each other Philosophers in all the course of their correspondence, and consider the rest of the world as sunk in total ignorance and barbarism.

NOTE [E], p. 413.

STOWE, Baker, Speed, Biondi, Hollingshed, Bacon. Some late writers, particularly Mr. Carte, have doubted whether Perkin were an impostor, and have even asserted him to be the true Plantagenet. But to refute this opinion, we need only reflect on the following particulars: (1) Though the circumstances of the wars between the two roses be in general involved in great obscurity, yet is there a most luminous ray thrown on all the transactions, during the usurpation of Richard, and the murder of the two young princes, by the narrative of Sir Thomas More, whose singular magnanimity, probity, and judgment, make him an evidence beyond all exception! No historian, either of ancient or modern times, can possibly have more weight: He may also be justly esteemed a contemporary with regard to the murder of the two princes: For though he was but five years of age when that event happened, he lived and was educated among the chief actors during the period of Richard: and it is plain, from his narrative itself, which is often extremely circumstantial, that he had the particulars from the eye-witnesses themselves: His authority, therefore, is irresistible; and sufficient to over-balance a hundred little doubts and scruples and objections. For in reality, his narrative is liable to no solid objection, nor is there any mistake detected in it. He says indeed, that the protector's partisans, particularly Dr. Shaw, spread abroad rumors of Edward IV.'s pre-contract with Elizabeth Lucy; whereas it now appears from record, that the parliament afterwards declared the king's children illegitimate

illegitimate, on pretence of his pre-contract with Lady Eleanor Talbot. But it must be remarked, that neither of these pre-contracts was ever so much as attempted to be proved: And why might not the protector's flatterers and partisans have made use sometimes of one false rumor, sometimes of another? Sir Thomas More mentions the one rumor as well as the other, and treats them both lightly, as they deserved. It is also thought incredible by Mr. Carte, that Dr. Shaw should have been encouraged by Richard to calumniate openly his mother, the dutchess of York, with whom that prince lived in good terms. But if there be any difficulty in this supposition, we need only suppose, that Dr. Shaw might have concerted in general his sermon with the protector or his ministers, and yet have chosen himself the particular topics, and chosen them very foolishly. This appears indeed to have been the case by the disgrace, into which he fell afterwards, and by the protector's neglect of him. (2) If Sir Thomas's quality of contemporary be disputed with regard to the duke of Gloucester's protectorate, it cannot possibly be disputed with regard to Perkin's imposture: He was then a man, and had a full opportunity of knowing and examining and judging of the truth. In asserting that the duke of York was murdered by his uncle, he certainly asserts, in the most express terms, that Perkin, who personated him, was an impostor. (3) There is another great genius who has carefully treated this point of history; so great a genius as to be esteemed with justice one of the chief ornaments of the nation, and indeed one of the most sublime writers that any age or nation has produced. It is lord Bacon I mean, who has related at full length, and without the least doubt or hesitation, all the impostures of Perkin Warbeck. If it be objected, that lord Bacon was no contemporary, and that we have the same materials, as he, upon which to form our judgment; it must be remarked, that lord Bacon plainly composed his elaborate and exact history from many records and papers which are now lost, and that consequently, he is always to be cited as an original historian. it were very strange, if Mr.

Carte's opinion were just, that, among all the papers, which lord Bacon perused, he never found any reason to suspect Perkin to be the true Plantagenet. There was at that time no interest in defaming Richard III. Bacon besides is a very unbiassed historian, nowise partial to Henry: We know the detail of that prince's oppressive government from him alone. It may only be thought, that, in summing up his character, he has laid the colors of blame more faintly than the very facts, he mentions, seem to require. Let me remark in passing, as a singularity, how much English history has been beholden to four great men, who have possessed the highest dignity in the law, More, Bacon, Clarendon, and Whitlocke. (4) But if contemporary evidence be so much sought after, there may in this case be produced the strongest and most undeniable in the world. The queen-dowager, her son the marquis of Dorset, a man of excellent understanding, Sir Edward Woodville, her brother, Sir Thomas St. Leger, who had married the king's sister, Sir John Bouchier, Sir Robert Willoughby, Sir Giles Daubeney, Sir Thomas Arundel, the Courtneys, the Cheyneys, the Talbots, the Stanleys, and in a word, all the partisans of the house of York, that is, the men of chief dignity in the nation; all these great persons were so assured of the murder of the two princes, that they applied to the earl of Richmond, the mortal enemy of their party and family; they projected to set him on the throne, which must have been utter ruin to them, if the princes were alive; and they stipulated to marry him to the princess Elizabeth, as heir to the crown, who in that case was no heir at all. Had each of those persons written the memoirs of his own times, would he not have said, that Richard murdered his nephews? Or would their pen be a better declaration, than their actions, of their real sentiments? (5) But we have another contemporary authority still better than even these great persons, so much interested to know the truth: It is that of Richard himself; He projected to marry his niece, a very unusual alliance in England, in order to unite her title with his own. He knew therefore her title to be good: For as to the declaration of her

illegitimacy, as it went upon no proof, or even pretence of proof, it was always regarded with the utmost contempt by the nation, and was considered as one of those parliamentary transactions, so frequent in that period, which were scandalous in themselves, and had no manner of authority. It was even so much despised as not to be reversed by parliament, after Henry and Elizabeth were on the throne. (6) We have also, as contemporary evidence, the universal established opinion of the age, both abroad and at home. This point was regarded as so uncontroverted, that when Richard notified his accession to the court of France, that court was struck with horror at his abominable parricide, in murdering both his nephews, as Philip de Comines tells us; and this sentiment went to such an unusual height, that, as we learn from the same author, the court would not make the least reply to him. (7) The same reasons, which convinced that age of the parricide, still subsist, and ought to carry the most undoubted evidence to us; namely, the very circumstance of the sudden disappearance of the princes from the Tower, and their appearance no where else. Every one said, *they have not escaped from their uncle, for he makes no search after them: He has not conveyed them elsewhere: For it is his business to declare so, in order to remove the imputation of murder from himself. He never would needlessly subject himself to the infamy and danger of being esteemed a parricide, without acquiring the security attending that crime. They were in his custody: He is answerable for them: If he gives no account of them, as he has a plain interest in their death, he must, by every rule of common sense, be regarded as the murderer. His flagrant usurpation, as well as his other treacherous and cruel actions, makes no better be expected from him. He could not say with Cain, that he was not his nephews's keeper.* This reasoning, which was irrefragable at the very first, became every day stronger, from Richard's continued silence, and the general and total ignorance of the place of these princes' abode. Richard's reign lasted about two years beyond this period; and surely, he could not

have found a better expedient for disappointing the earl of Richmond's projects, as well as justifying his own character; than the producing of his nephews. (8) If it were necessary, amidst this blaze of evidence, to produce proofs, which, in any other case, would have been regarded as considerable, and would have carried great validity with them, I might mention Dighton and Tyrrel's account of the murder. This last gentleman especially was not likely to subject himself to the reproach of so great a crime, by an imposture, which, it appears, did not acquire him the favor of Henry. (9) The duke of York, being a boy of nine years of age, could not have made his escape without the assistance of some elder persons. Would it not have been their chief concern instantly to convey intelligence of so great an event to his mother, the queen-dowager, to his aunt, the dutchess of Burgundy, and to the other friends of the family. The dutchess protected Simnel; a project, which, had it been successful, must have ended in the crowning of Warwic, and the exclusion of the duke of York! This, among many other proofs, evinces that she was ignorant of the escape of that prince, which is impossible, had it been real. (10) The total silence with regard to the persons who aided him in his escape, as also with regard to the place of his abode during more than eight years, is a sufficient proof of the imposture. (11) Perkin's own account of his escape is incredible and absurd. He said, that murderers were employed by his uncle to kill him and his brother: They perpetrated the crime against his brother, but took compassion on him, and allowed him to escape. This account is contained in all the historians of that age. (12) Perkin himself made a full confession of his imposture no less than three times; once when he surrendered himself prisoner, a second time when he was set in the stocks at Cheapside and Westminster, and a third time, which carries undoubted evidence, at the foot of the gibbet, on which he was hanged. Not the least surmise that the confession had ever been procured by torture: And surely, the last time he had nothing farther to fear. (13) Had not Henry been

assured, that Perkin was a ridiculous impostor, disavowed by the whole nation, he never would have allowed him to live an hour after he came into his power; much less, would he have twice pardoned him. His treatment of the innocent earl of Warwic, who in reality had no title to the crown, is a sufficient confirmation of this reasoning. (14) We know with certainty whence the whole imposture came, namely, from the intrigues of the dutchess of Burgundy: She had before acknowledged and supported Lambert Simnel, an avowed impostor. It is remarkable, that Mr. Carte, in order to preserve the weight of the dutchess's testimony in favor of Perkin, suppresses entirely this material fact: A strong effect of party prejudices, and this author's desire of blackening Henry VII. whose hereditary title to the crown was defective. (15) There never was, at that time, any evidence or shadow of evidence produced, of Perkin's identity with Richard Plantagenet. Richard had disappeared when near nine years of age, and Perkin did not appear till he was a man. Could any one, from his aspect, pretend then to be sure of the identity? He had got some stories concerning Richard's childhood, and the court of England: But all that it was necessary for a boy of nine to remark or remember was easily suggested to him by the dutchess of Burgundy, or Frion, Henry's secretary, or by any body that had ever lived at court. It is true, many persons of note were at first deceived; but the discontents against Henry's government, and the general enthusiasm for the house of York, account sufficiently for this temporary delusion. Every body's eyes were opened long before Perkin's death. (16) The circumstance of finding the two dead bodies in the reign of Charles II. is not surely indifferent. They were found in the very place, which More, Bacon, and other ancient authors had assigned as the place of interment of the young princes: The bones corresponded by their size to the age of the princes: The secret and irregular place of their interment, not being in holy ground, proves that the boys had been secretly murdered: And in the Tower, no boys, but those who are very nearly related to the crown, can

be exposed to a violent death: If we compare all these circumstances we shall find, that the inference is just and strong, that they were the bodies of Edward the Vth and his brother, the very inference that was drawn at the time of the discovery.

Since the publication of this History, Mr. Walpole has published his Historic Doubts concerning Richard III. Nothing can be a stronger proof how ingenious and agreeable that gentleman's pen is, than his being able to make an inquiry concerning a remote point of English history, an object of general conversation. The foregoing note has been enlarged on account of that performance.

NOTE [F], p. 232.

ROT. Parl. ;. H. VII. n. 17. The preamble is remarkable, and shows the state of the nation at that time.
 “ The king, our sovereign lord, remembereth, how, by
 “ our unlawful maintainances, giving of liveries, signs and
 “ tokens, retainders by indentures, promises, oaths,
 “ writings, and other embraceries of his subjects, untrue
 “ demeanings of sheriffs in making pannels, and untrue
 “ returns by taking money, by juries, etc. the policy of
 “ this nation is most subdued.” It must indeed be confessed, that such a state of the country required great discretionary power in the sovereign; nor will the same maxims of government suit such a rude people, that may be proper in a more advanced stage of society. The establishment of the Star-chamber or the enlargement of its power in the reign of Henry VII. might have been as wise as the abolition of it in that of Charles I.

NOTE [G], p. 436.

THE duke of Northumberland has lately printed a household book of an old earl of that family, who lived at this time: The author has been favored with the perusal of it; and it contains many curious particulars, which mark the manners and way of living in that rude, not to say bar-

barous age; as well as the prices of commodities. I have extracted a few of them from that piece, which gives a true picture of ancient manners, and is one of the most singular monuments that English antiquity affords us: For we may be confident, however rude the strokes, that no Baron's family was on a nobler or more splendid footing. The family consists of 166 persons, masters and servants: Fifty seven strangers are reckoned upon every day: On the whole 223. Two-pence halfpenny are supposed to be the daily expence of each for meat, drink, and firing. This would make a groat of our present money: Supposing provisions between three and four times cheaper, it would be equivalent to fourteen-pence: No great sum for a nobleman's house-keeping; especially considering, that the chief expence of a family, at that time, consisted in meat and drink: For the sum allotted by the earl for his whole annual expence is 1118 pounds seventeen shillings and eight-pence; meat, drink, and firing cost 796 pounds eleven shillings and two-pence, more than two thirds of the whole: In a modern family it is not above a third, p. 157, 158, 159. The whole expence of the earl's family is managed with an exactness that is very rigid, and, if we make no allowance for ancient manners, such as may seem to border on an extreme; insomuch, that the number of pieces, which must be cut out of every quarter of beef, mutton, pork, veal, nay stock-fish and salmon, are determined, and must be entered and accounted for by the different clerks appointed for that purpose: If a servant be absent a day, his mess is struck off: If he go on my lord's business, board wages are allowed him, eight-pence a day for his journey in winter, five-pence in summer: When he stays in any place, two-pence a day are allowed him, beside the maintenance of his horse. Somewhat above a quarter of wheat is allowed for every mouth throughout the year; and the wheat is estimated at five shillings and eight-pence a quarter. Two hundred and fifty quarters of malt are allowed, at four shillings a quarter: Two hogsheds are to be made of a quarter; which amounts to

about a bottle and a third of beer a day to each person, p. 4. and the beer will not be very strong. One hundred and nine fat beeves are to be bought at Allhallow-tide, at thirteen shillings and four-pence a piece: And twenty four lean beeves to be bought at St. Helens at eight shillings a piece: These are to be put into the pastures to feed; and are to serve from Midsummer to Michaelmas; which is consequently the only time that the family eats fresh beef: During all the rest of the year they live on salted meat, p. 5. One hundred and sixty gallons of mustard are allowed in a year; which seems indeed requisite for the salt beef, p. 18. Six hundred and forty seven sheep are allowed, at twenty pence a piece; and these seem also to be all eat salted, except between Lammas and Michaelmas, p. 5. Only twenty-five hogs are allowed at two shillings a piece; twenty-eight veals at twenty-pence; forty lambs at ten pence or a shilling, p. 7. These seem to be reserved for my lord's table, or that of the upper servants, called the knights'-table. The other servants, as they eat salted meat, almost through the whole year, and with few or no vegetables, had a very bad and unhealthy diet: So that there cannot be any thing more erroneous, than the magnificent ideas formed of *the Roast Beef of Old England*. We must entertain as mean an idea of its cleanliness: Only seventy ells of linen at eight-pence an ell are annually allowed for this great family: No sheets were used: This linen was made into eight table-cloths for my lord's table; and one table-cloth for the knights, p. 16. This last, I suppose was washed only once a month. Only forty shillings are allowed for washing throughout the whole year; and most of it seems expended on the linen belonging to the chapel. The drinking, however, was tolerable, namely, ten tuns and two hogsheds of Gascony wine, at the rate of four pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence a tun, p. 6. Only ninety-one dozen of candles for the whole year, p. 14. The family rose at six in the morning, dined at ten, and supped at four in the afternoon: The gates were all shut at nine, and no farther ingress or egress

permitted, p. 314, 318. My lord and lady have set on their table for breakfast at seven o'clock in the morning a quart of beer; as much wine; two pieces of salt fish, six red-herrings, four white ones, or a dish of sprats. In flesh days half a chine of mutton, or a chine of beef boiled, p. 73, 75. Mass is ordered to be said at six o'clock, in order, says the household-book, that all my lord's servants may rise early, p. 170. Only twenty-four fires are allowed, beside the kitchen and hall, and most of these have only a peck of coals a day allowed them, p. 99. After Lady-day, no fires permitted in the rooms, except half-fires in my lord's and lady's, and lord Piercy's and the nursery, p. 101. It is to be observed that my lord kept house in Yorkshire, where there is certainly much cold weather after Lady-day. Eighty chalders of coals at four shillings and two-pence a chalders, suffices throughout the whole year; and because coal will not burn without wood, says the household-book, sixty-four loads of great wood are also allowed, at twelve-pence a load, p. 22. This is a proof that grates were not then used. Here is an article. *It is devised that from henceforth no capons to be bought but only for my lord's own mess, and that the said capons shall be bought for two-pence a piece, lean, and fed in the poultry; and master chamberlain and the stewards be fed with capons, if there be strangers sitting with them,* p. 102. Pigs are to be bought at three-pence or a groat a piece: Geese at the same price: Chickens at a halfpenny: Hens at two-pence, and only for the above-mentioned tables. Here is another article. *Item, It is thought good that no plovers be bought at no season but only in Christmas and principal feasts, and my lord to be served therewith and his board-end, and none other, and to be bought for a penny a piece, or a penny halfpenny at most,* p. 103. Woodcocks are to be bought at the same price. Partridges at two-pence, p. 104, 105. Pheasants, a shilling; peacocks the same, p. 106. My lord keeps only twenty-seven horses in his stable at his own charge; His upper servants have allowance for maintaining their own horses,

p. 126. These horses are, six gentle horses, as they are called, at hay and hard meat throughout the whole year, four palfreys, three hobbies and nags, three sumpter horses, six horses for those servants to whom my lord furnishes a horse, two sumpter horses more, and three mill horses, two for carrying the corn and one for grinding it; whence we may infer that mills, either water or wind-mills, were then unknown, at least very rare: Besides these, there are seven great trotting horses for the chariot or waggon. He allows a peck of oats a day, besides loaves made of beans, for his principal horses; the oats at twenty pence, the beans at two shillings a quarter. The load of hay is at two shillings and eight-pence. When my lord is on a journey, he carries thirty-six horsemen along with him; together with bed and other accommodation, p. 157. The inns, it seems, could afford nothing tolerable. My lord passes the year in three country-seats, all in Yorkshire, Wryfel, Leckenfield, and Topclyffe; but he has furniture only for one: He carries every thing along with him, beds, tables, chairs, kitchen utensils, all which, we may conclude, were so coarse, that they could not be spoilt by the carriage: Yet seventeen carts and one waggon suffice for the whole, p. 391. One cart suffices for all his kitchen utensils, cooks beds, etc. p. 388. One remarkable circumstance is, that he has eleven priests in his house, besides seventeen persons, chanters, musicians, etc. belonging to his chapel: Yet he has only two cooks for a family of 223 persons, p. 325 *. Their meals were certainly dressed in the slovenly manner of a ship's company. It is amusing to observe the pompous and even royal style assumed by this Tartar chief: He does not give any orders, though only for the right making of mustard; but it is introduced with this preamble, *It seemeth good to us and our council*. If we consider the magnificent and elegant manner in which the Venetian and other Italian noblemen then lived, with

* In another place, mention is made of four cooks, p. 388. But I suppose, that the two servants, called in p. 325, 'groom of the larder and child of the scullery, are in p. 388. comprehended in the number of cooks.

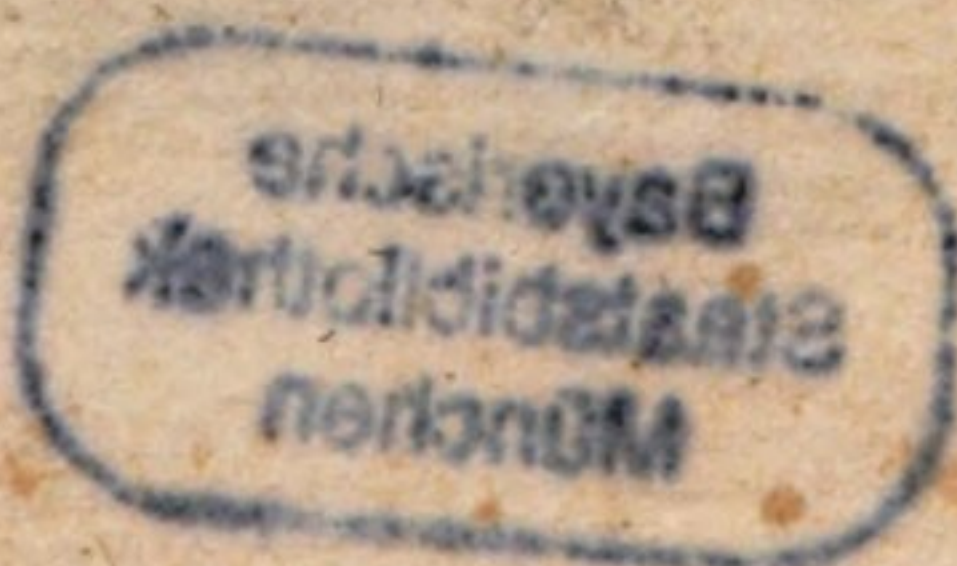
the progress made by the Italians in literature and the fine arts, we shall not wonder that they considered the ultra-mountain nations as barbarous. The Flemish also seem to have much excelled the English and even the French. Yet the earl is sometimes not deficient in generosity: He pays for instance, an annual pension of a groat a year to my lady of Walsingham, for her interest in Heaven; the same sum to the holy blood at Hales, p. 337. No mention is any where made of plate; but only of the hiring of pewter vessels. The servants seem all to have bought their own cloaths from their wages.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.



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END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME



Hume, David, 1711-1776

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